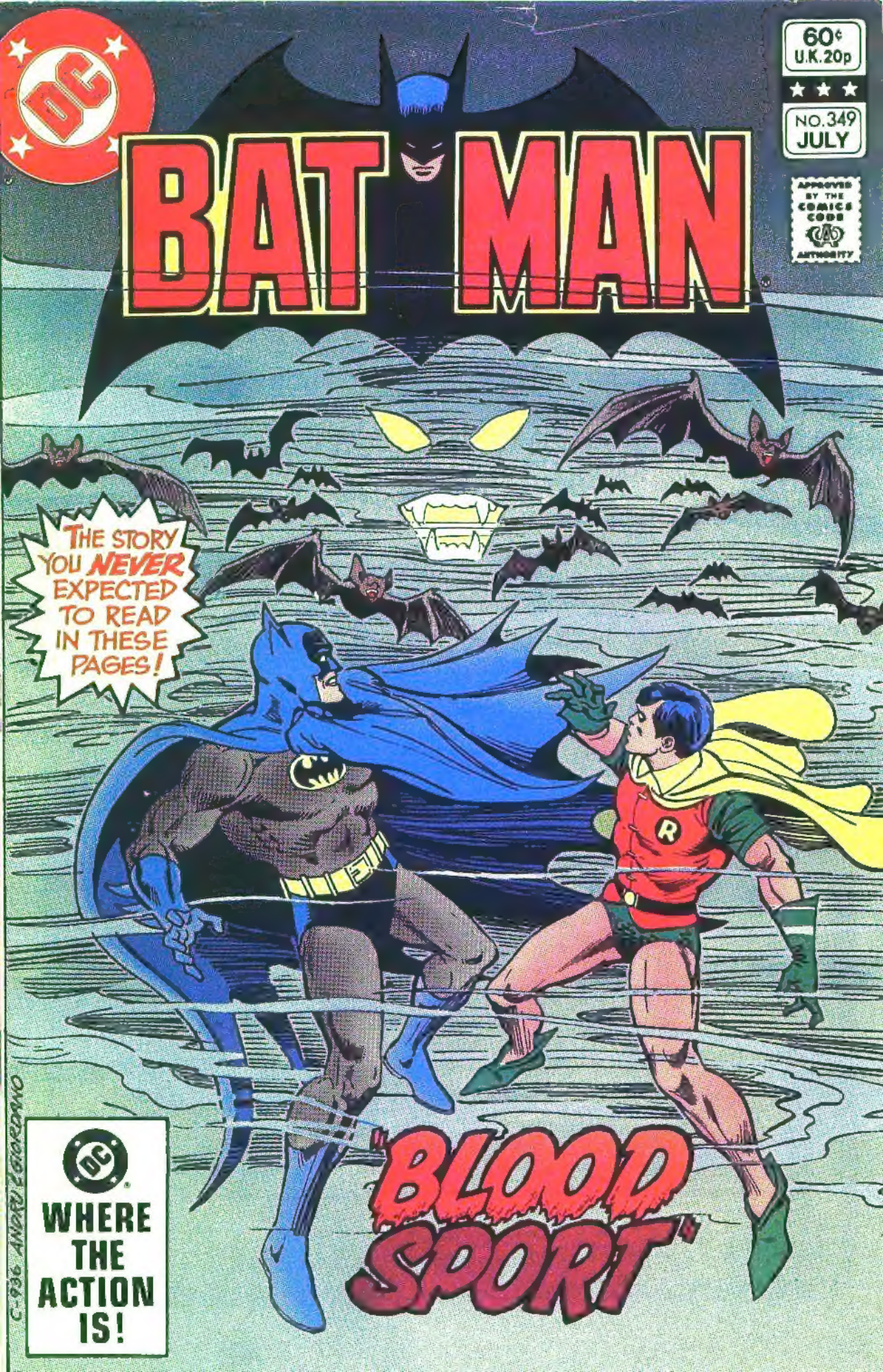
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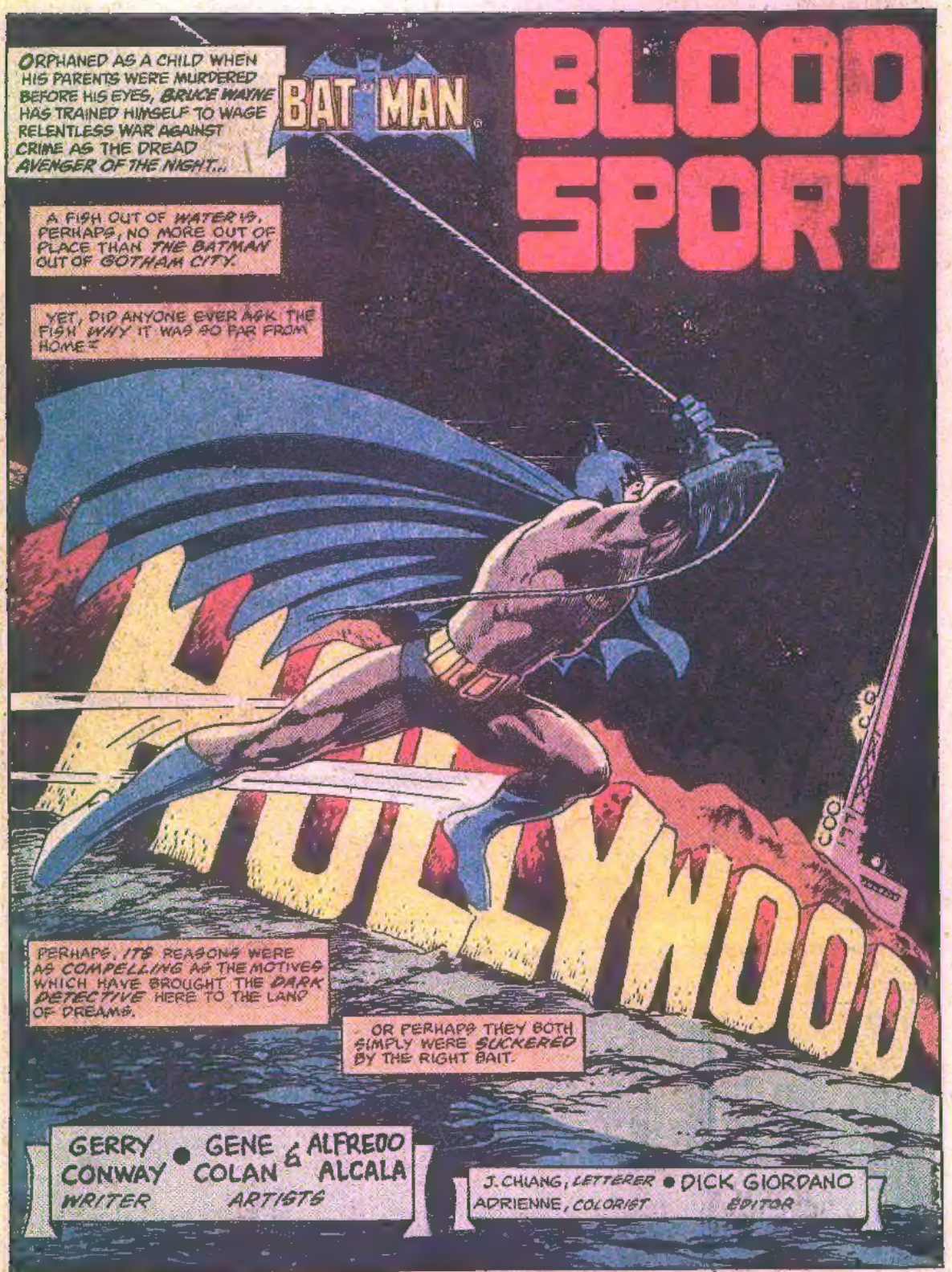
ORPHANED AS A CHILD WHEN HIS PARENTS WERE MURDERED BEFORE HIS EYES, BRUCE WAYNE HAS TRAINED HIMSELF TO WAGE RELENTLESS WAR AGAINST CRIME AS THE DREAD AVENGER OF THE NIGHT...
BAT MAN
BLOOD SPORT
A FISH OUT OF WATER IS, PERHAPS, NO MORE OUT OF PLACE THAN THE BATMAN OUT OF GOTHAM CITY.
YET, DID ANYONE EVER ASK THE FISH WHY IT WAS SO FAR FROM HOME?
HOLLYWOOD
PERHAPS, ITS REASONS WERE AS COMPELLING AS THE MOTIVES WHICH HAVE BROUGHT THE DARK DETECTIVE HERE TO THE LAND OF DREAMS.
OR PERHAPS THEY BOTH SIMPLY WERE SUCKERED BY THE RIGHT BAIT.
GERRY CONWAY WRITER
GENE COLAN & ALFREDO ALCALA ARTISTS
J. CHIANG, LETTERER
ADRIENNE, COLORIST
DICK GIORDANO EDITOR

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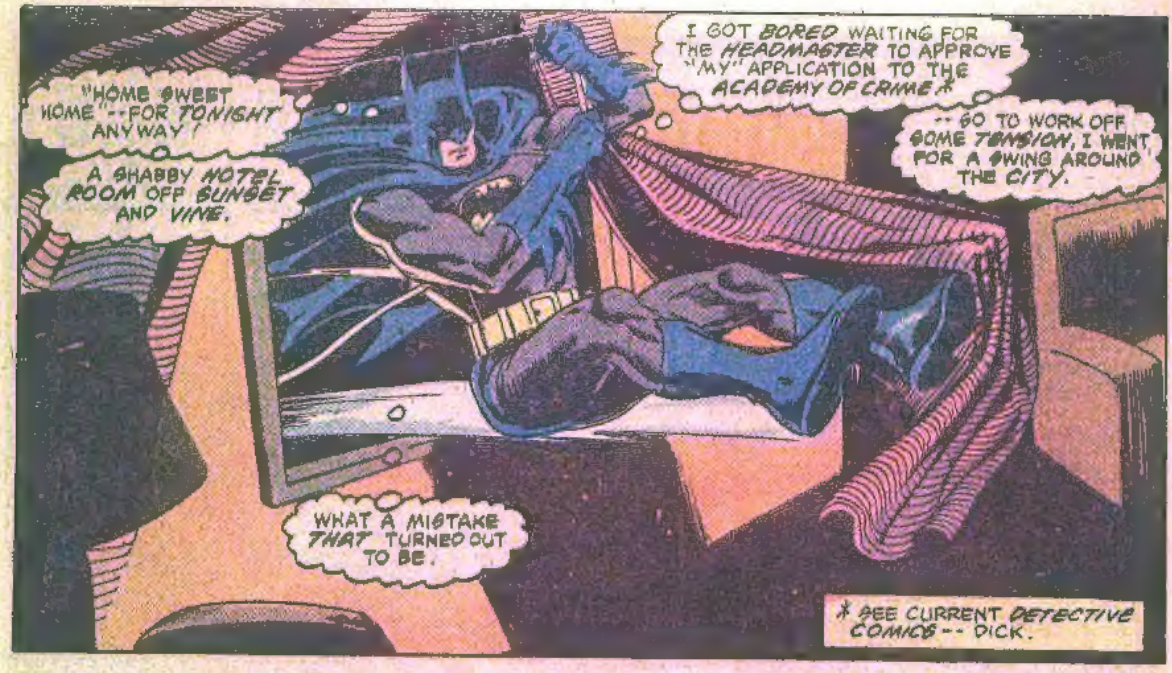
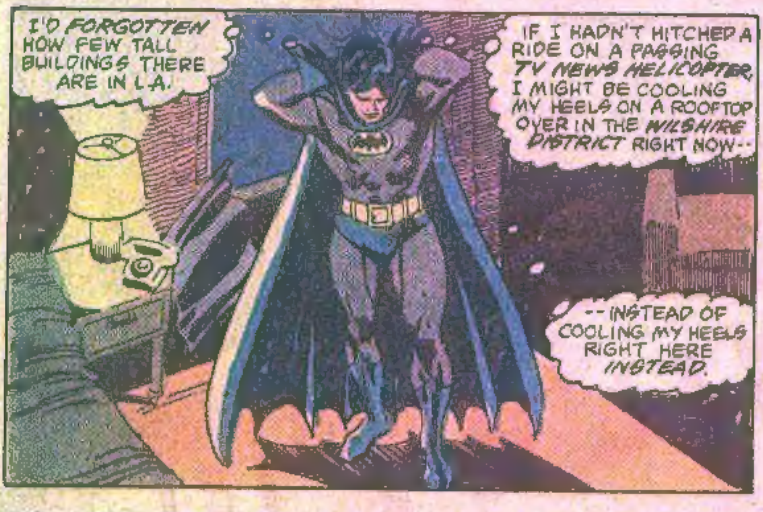
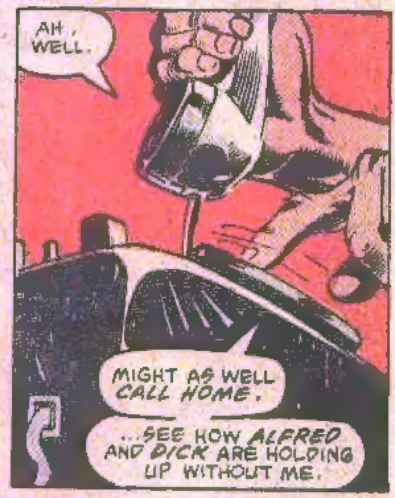

"HOME SWEET HOME"--FOR TONIGHT ANYWAY!
A SHABBY HOTEL ROOM OFF SUNSET AND VINE.
I GOT BORED WAITING FOR THE HEADMASTER TO APPROVE "MY" APPLICATION TO THE ACADEMY OF CRIME*
--SO TO WORK OFF SOME TENSION, I WENT FOR A SWING AROUND THE CITY.
WHAT A MISTAKE THAT TURNED OUT TO BE.
* SEE CURRENT DETECTIVE COMICS -- DICK.


I'D FORGOTTEN HOW FEW TALL BUILDINGS THERE ARE IN L.A.
IF I HADN'T HITCHED A RIDE ON A PASSING TV NEWS HELICOPTER, I MIGHT BE COOLING MY HEELS ON A ROOFTOP OVER IN THE WILSHIRE DISTRICT RIGHT NOW--
--INSTEAD OF COOLING MY HEELS RIGHT HERE INSTEAD.


AH, WELL.
MIGHT AS WELL CALL HOME.
...SEE HOW ALFRED AND DICK ARE HOLDING UP WITHOUT ME.

3,000 MILES EAST, ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF GOTHAM CITY...
RING RING

RRING
RING

NO ANSWER. THAT'S ODD... IT'S AFTER TEN O'CLOCK IN GOTHAM.
2

"... AND DICK RARELY PATROLS LATE ON SCHOOL NIGHTS. HE MUST BE OUT WITH A GIRL..."
SMILING, BRUCE WAYNE HANGS UP, HIS THOUGHTS ALREADY TURNING TO HIS PLANS FOR TOMORROW.*
WHILE, NORTH OF GOTHAM CITY, A SPRING STORM RAGES AROUND A LONELY MANSION--
* SEE DETECTIVE #516 FOR DETAILS--D.
--AND A STROKE OF LIGHTNING IN THE NIGHT SHEDS LIGHT OVER A FACE UNNATURALLY PALE.
THIS IS DALA.. DICK GRAYSON'S GIRL.
STORMS USED TO TERRIFY ME.
I REMEMBER ONCE, I MUST HAVE BEEN FIVE YEARS OLD, HIDING IN MY FATHER'S CLOSET WHILE THUNDER WALKED THE RIVER BANKS OUTSIDE OUR HOME.
THAT WAS IN NEW ORLEANS... YEARS AND YEARS AGO.
IN THE SUMMER, IT RAINS EVERY DAY IN LOUISIANA.
I NEVER GOT USED TO THAT RAIN. NEVER.
SHE SMILES WISTFULLY, LOST IN MEMORY.
THEN, REMEMBERING THE BOUND YOUTH BEFORE HER, SHE BENDS OVER HIM...
POOR DICK. POOR ROBIN.
YOU MUST THINK I'M MAD.
3

DON'T WORRY. IT'LL ALL BE OVER VERY SOON NOW.
A KISS... BEFORE I GO.
DALA, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE...
--MRRMPH!
HER BREATH IS SWEET ON HIS CHEEK, LIKE A LOVER'S CARESS...
AFTER A MOMENT, SIGHING SHE LOOKS AWAY, AND IT'S AS IF HE'D CEASED TO EXIST...
MY BROTHER WILL BE GETTING IMPATIENT.
THERE'S SO MUCH TO DO--SO MANY PREPARATIONS TO MAKE.
THE DOOR WHISPERS SHUT BEHIND HER.
...AND HE'S ALONE WITH ONLY THE SOUND OF RAIN ON WINDOW-GLASS TO DISTRACT H'M FROM THE HEAVY POUNDING OF HIS HEART.
DALA'S ACTING LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF AN OLD VINCENT PRICE MOVIE--
--AND FRANKLY, I'M STARTING TO GET SCARED!
THIS IS CRAZY.
NONE OF IT MAKES SENSE!
HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO WRONG ABOUT HER--THINKING SHE LOVED ME?
I MUST'VE BEEN--CRAZY?
4

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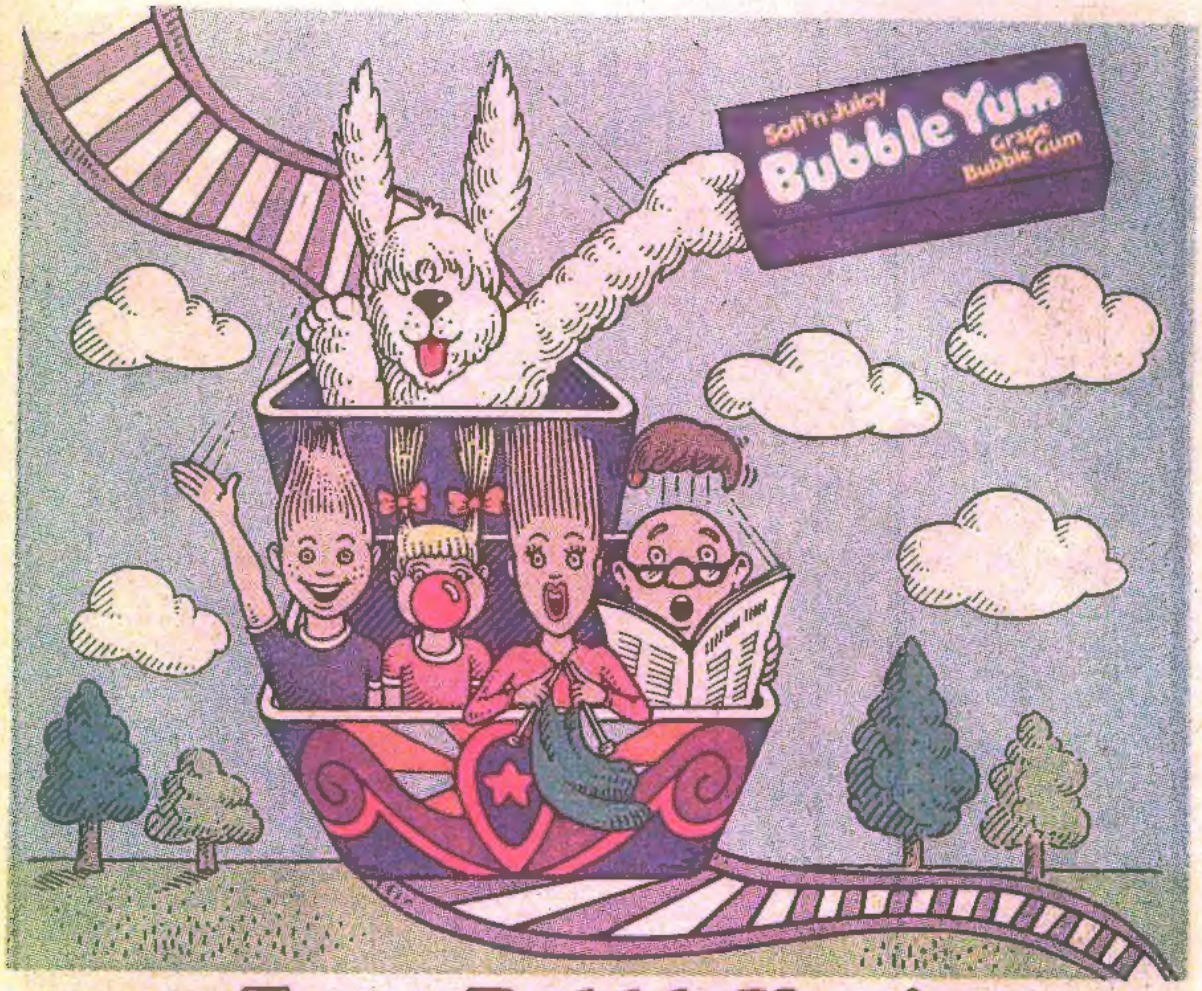

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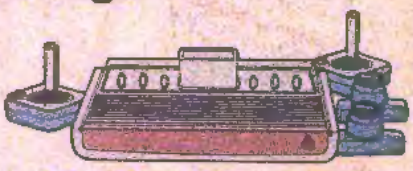

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ON SALE APRIL 8TH

WILD WESTERN ACTION WITH THE *GUNFIGHTER* WHO BROKE ALL THE RULES!

ON SALE APRIL 15TH

WHERE THE *ACTION* KEEPS ON COMING!

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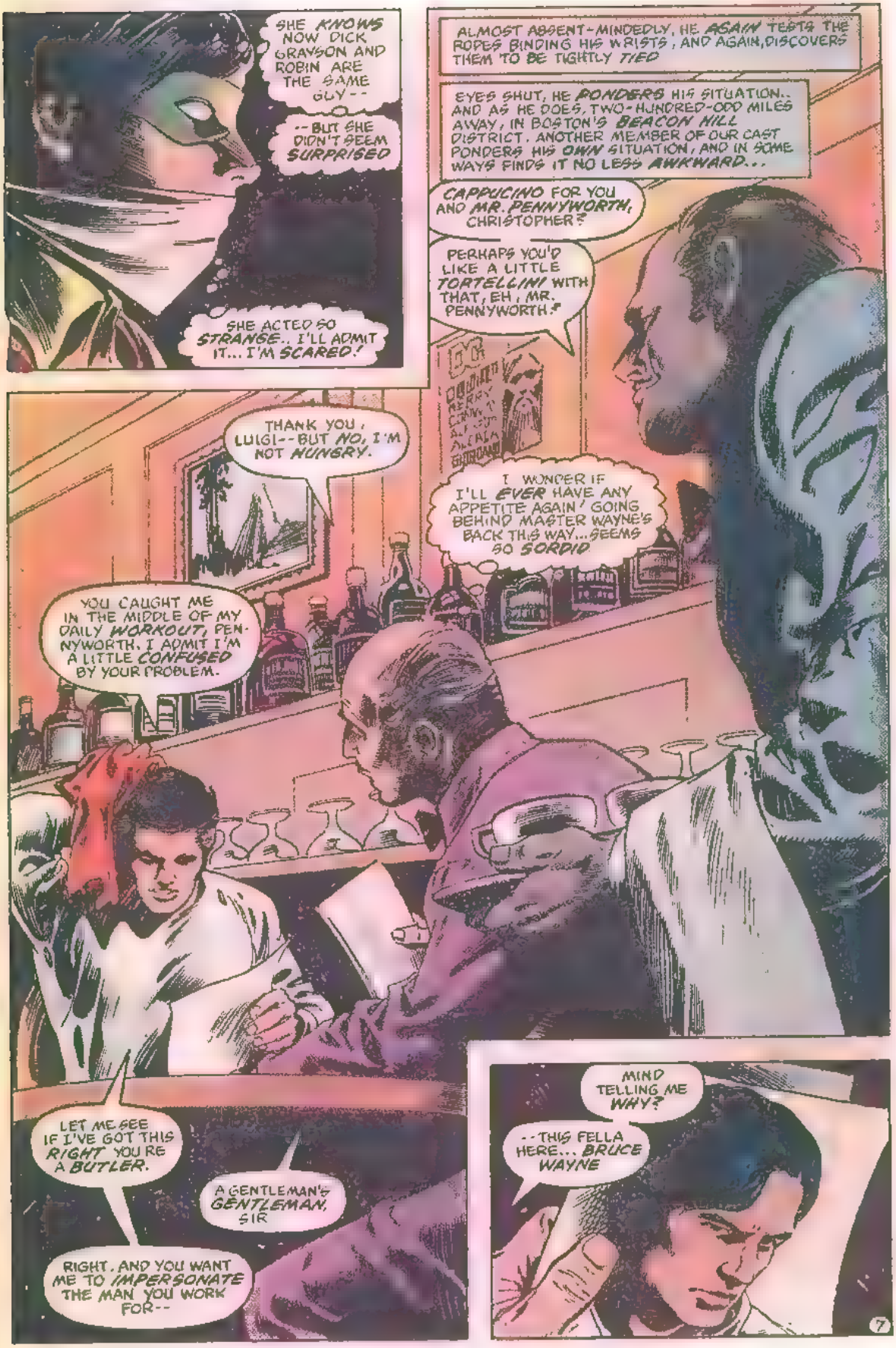
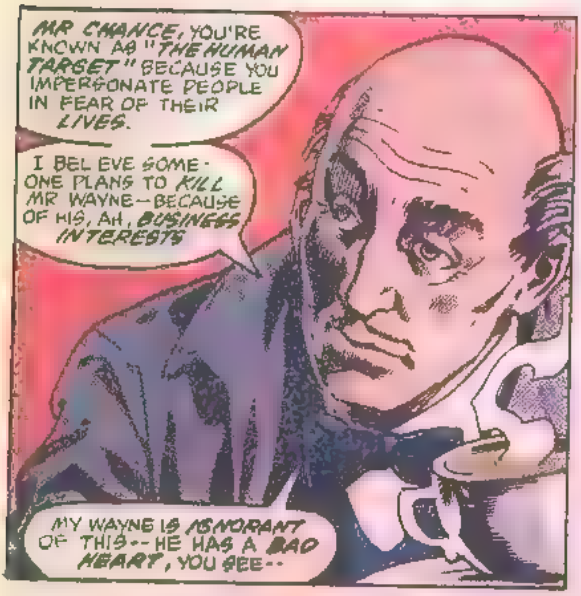
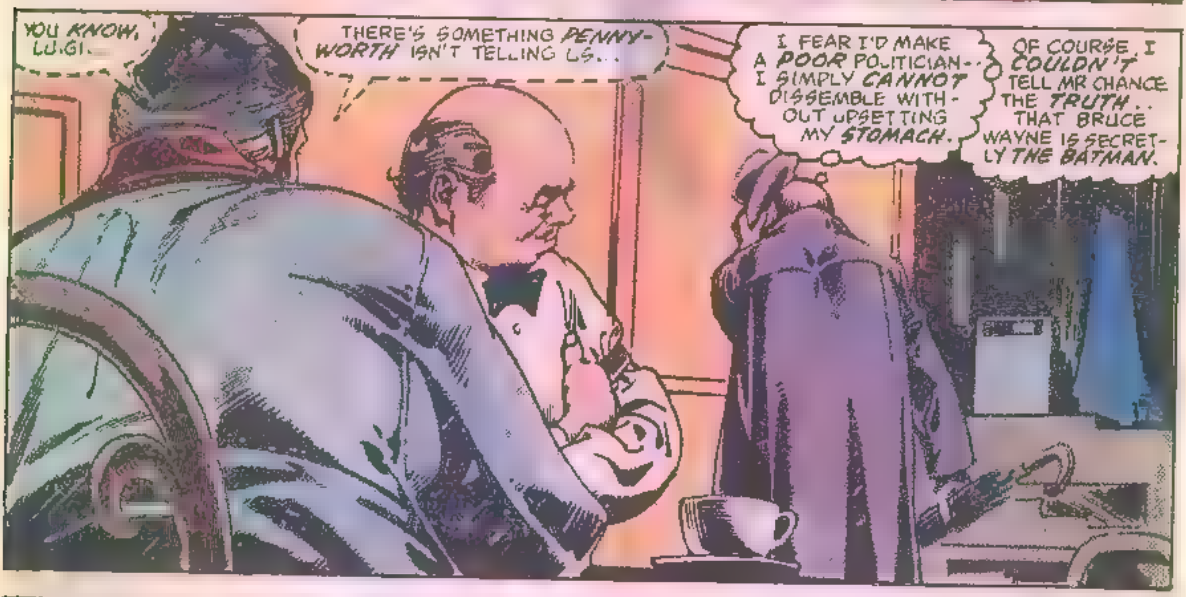
NO... NOT CRAZY. JUST CRAZY IN LOVE.
I MET HER THAT FIRST DAY I MATRICULATED AT GOTHAM UNIVERSITY..
"SHE WAS YEARS OLDER THAN ME, BUT THAT DIDN'T SEEM TO MATTER.
"BEING WITH HER MADE ME FEEL LIKE ALL THE QUESTIONS IN MY LIFE HAD BEEN ANSWERED.
NOTHING COULD COME BE-TWEEN US.
AND THEN, SOMETHING DID. ONE NIGHT AFTER CLASS, SHE TOLD ME IT WAS FINISHED. JUST LIKE THAT.. WITHOUT A REASON.
NJ9640
"I THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMEONE ELSE.. AND MAYBE I WENT A LITTLE CRACKERS.
"DAYS WENT BY... I BROODED... AND ONE NIGHT I DID SOMETHING STUPID.
"I SWITCHED TO ROBIN-- AND FOLLOWED HER HOME...
9

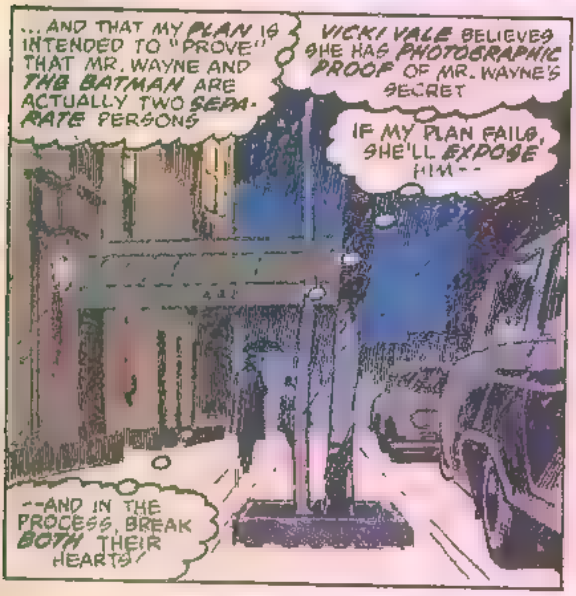
"HOME WAS THIS WEIRD, RUNDOWN MANSION.
"IT DIDN'T FIT MY IMAGE OF HER...
...AND IT WASN'T UNTIL I'D SEEN HER MOVING AROUND SO FAMILIARLY INSIDE, THAT I ACCEPTED THAT THIS WAS WHERE SHE LIVED.
"EVEN SO, I HAD SOME WILD IDEA SHE WAS IN TROUBLE...!
"I SLIPPED INSIDE, AFTER SHE'D LEFT HER ROOM--
"--AND WANDERED INTO AN UPSTAIRS HALLWAY. I COULD HEAR HER VOICE DOWNSTAIRS.
"IT SOUNDED LIKE SHE WAS CHANTING SOMETHING.
"A FLOORBOARD CREAKED BEHIND ME; I STARTED TO TURN--
THUD
"--BUT I NEVER FINISHED THE MOVE.
"I REMEMBER FALLING... THINKING HOW STUPID I'D BEEN... THEN, NOTHING.
THUD
"A FEW MINUTES AGO, I WOKE UP, TIED TO THIS CHAIR... AND SAW HER BY THE WINDOW..."
6

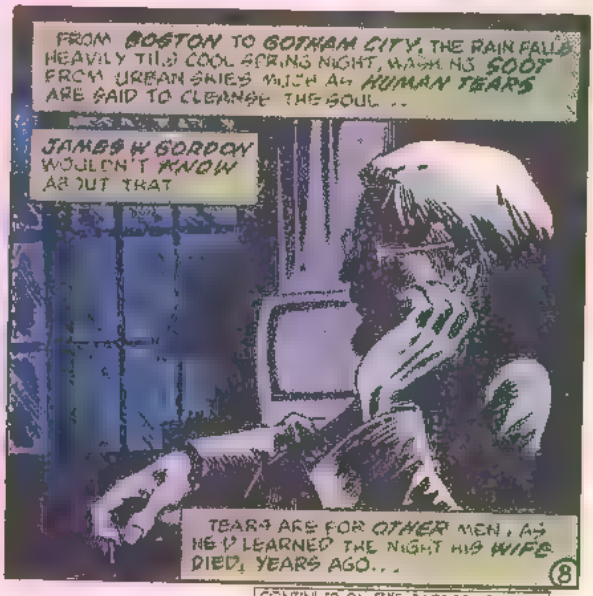

SHE KNOWS NOW DICK GRAYSON AND ROBIN ARE THE SAME GUY--
--BUT SHE DIDN'T SEEM SURPRISED
SHE ACTED SO STRANGE.. I'LL ADMIT IT... I'M SCARED!
ALMOST ABSENT-MINDEDLY, HE AGAIN TESTS THE ROPES BINDING HIS WRISTS, AND AGAIN, DISCOVERS THEM TO BE TIGHTLY TIED
EYES SHUT, HE PONDERS HIS SITUATION.. AND AS HE DOES, TWO-HUNDRED-ODD MILES AWAY, IN BOSTON'S BEACON HILL DISTRICT. ANOTHER MEMBER OF OUR CAST PONDERS HIS OWN SITUATION, AND IN SOME WAYS FINDS IT NO LESS AWKWARD...
CAPPUCINO FOR YOU AND MR. PENNYWORTH, CHRISTOPHER?
PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE A LITTLE TORTELLINI WITH THAT, EH, MR. PENNYWORTH?
THANK YOU, LUIGI--BUT NO, I'M NOT HUNGRY.
I WONDER IF I'LL EVER HAVE ANY APPETITE AGAIN, GOING BEHIND MASTER WAYNE'S BACK THIS WAY... SEEMS SO SORDID
YOU CAUGHT ME IN THE MIDDLE OF MY DAILY WORKOUT, PENNYWORTH. I ADMIT I'M A LITTLE CONFUSED BY YOUR PROBLEM.
LET ME SEE IF I'VE GOT THIS RIGHT. YOU'RE A BUTLER.
A GENTLEMAN'S GENTLEMAN, SIR
RIGHT. AND YOU WANT ME TO IMPERSONATE THE MAN YOU WORK FOR--
MIND TELLING ME WHY?
--THIS FELLA HERE... BRUCE WAYNE
7


MR CHANCE, YOU'RE KNOWN AS "THE HUMAN TARGET" BECAUSE YOU IMPERSONATE PEOPLE IN FEAR OF THEIR LIVES.
I BELIEVE SOMEONE PLANS TO KILL MR WAYNE—BECAUSE OF HIS, AH, BUSINESS INTERESTS
MY WAYNE IS IGNORANT OF THIS—HE HAS A BAD HEART, YOU SEE—

—AND YOU'RE WORRIED THAT THE THOUGHT HE MIGHT BE AN ASSASSINATION TARGET—WOULD KILL HIM.
IT'S A TRICKY SITUATION, PENNYWORTH.
I'LL GUARANTEE YOUR FEE, SIR
FEE BE DAMNED. I'LL DO IT
HERE'S THE ADDRESS IN GOTHAM, SIR.


YOU KNOW, LUIGI...
THERE'S SOMETHING PENNYWORTH ISN'T TELLING US...
I FEAR I'D MAKE A POOR POLITICIAN—I SIMPLY CANNOT DISSEMBLE WITHOUT UPSETTING MY STOMACH.
OF COURSE, I COULDN'T TELL MR CHANCE THE TRUTH... THAT BRUCE WAYNE IS SECRETLY THE BATMAN.


...AND THAT MY PLAN IS INTENDED TO "PROVE" THAT MR. WAYNE AND THE BATMAN ARE ACTUALLY TWO SEPARATE PERSONS
VICKI VALE BELIEVES SHE HAS PHOTOGRAPHIC PROOF OF MR. WAYNE'S SECRET
IF MY PLAN FAILS, SHE'LL EXPOSE HIM—
—AND IN THE PROCESS, BREAK BOTH THEIR HEARTS!


FROM BOSTON TO GOTHAM CITY, THE RAIN FALLS HEAVILY TILL A COOL SPRING NIGHT, WASHING SOOT FROM URBAN SKIES MUCH AS HUMAN TEARS ARE SAID TO CLEANSE THE SOUL...
JAMES W GORDON WOULDN'T KNOW ABOUT THAT
TEARS ARE FOR OTHER MEN, AS HE'D LEARNED THE NIGHT HIS WIFE DIED, YEARS AGO...
8

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

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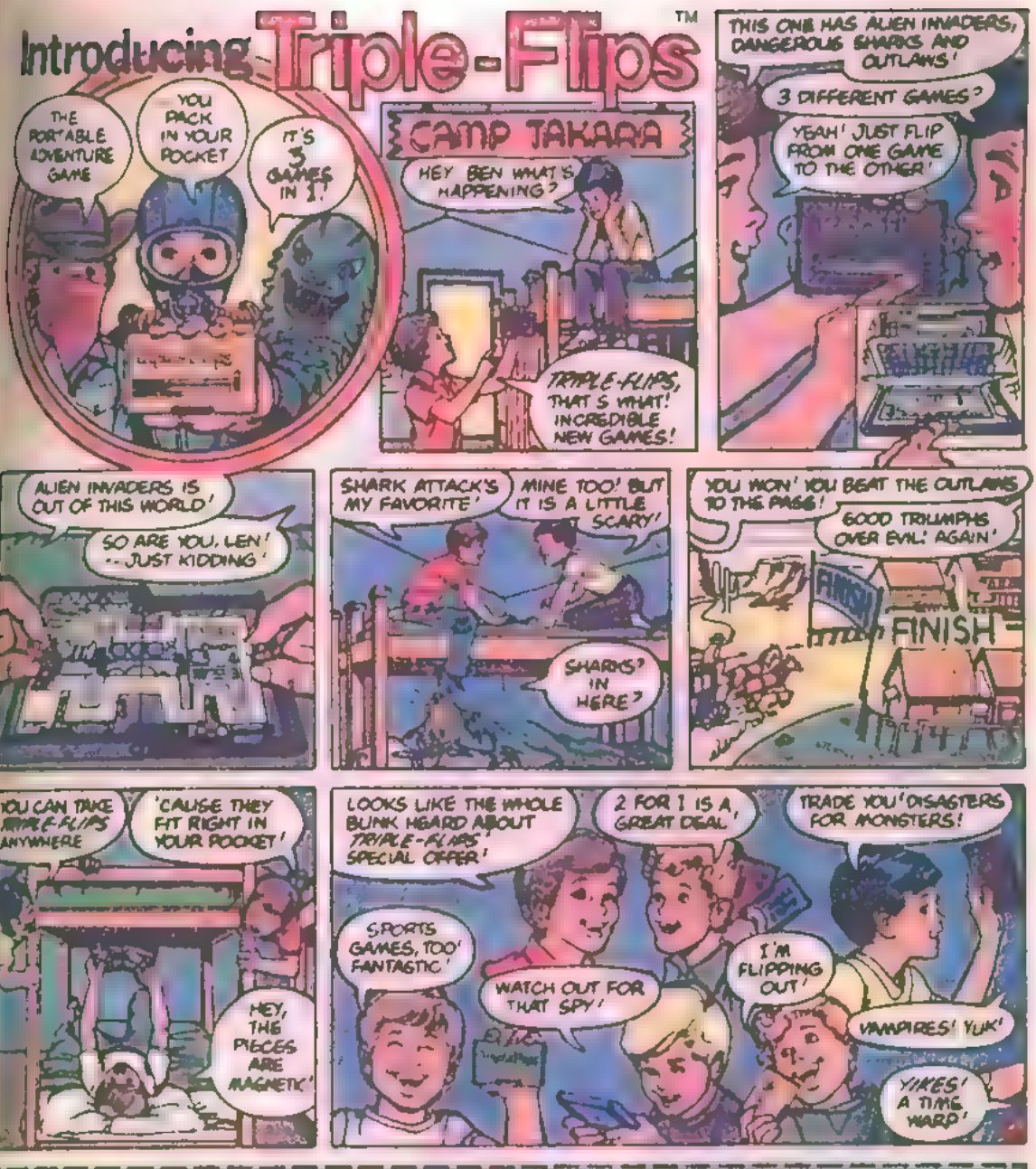
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YEAH! JUST FLIP FROM ONE GAME TO THE OTHER!
ALIEN INVADERS IS OUT OF THIS WORLD!
SO ARE YOU, LEN! -- JUST KIDDING!
SHARK ATTACK'S MY FAVORITE!
MINE TOO! BUT IT IS A LITTLE SCARY!
SHARKS! IN HERE?
YOU WON! YOU BEAT THE OUTLAWS TO THE PASS!
GOOD TRIUMPHS OVER EVIL! AGAIN!
FINISH
YOU CAN TAKE TRIPLE-FLIPS ANYWHERE
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I'M FLIPPING OUT!
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YIKES! A TIME WARP!

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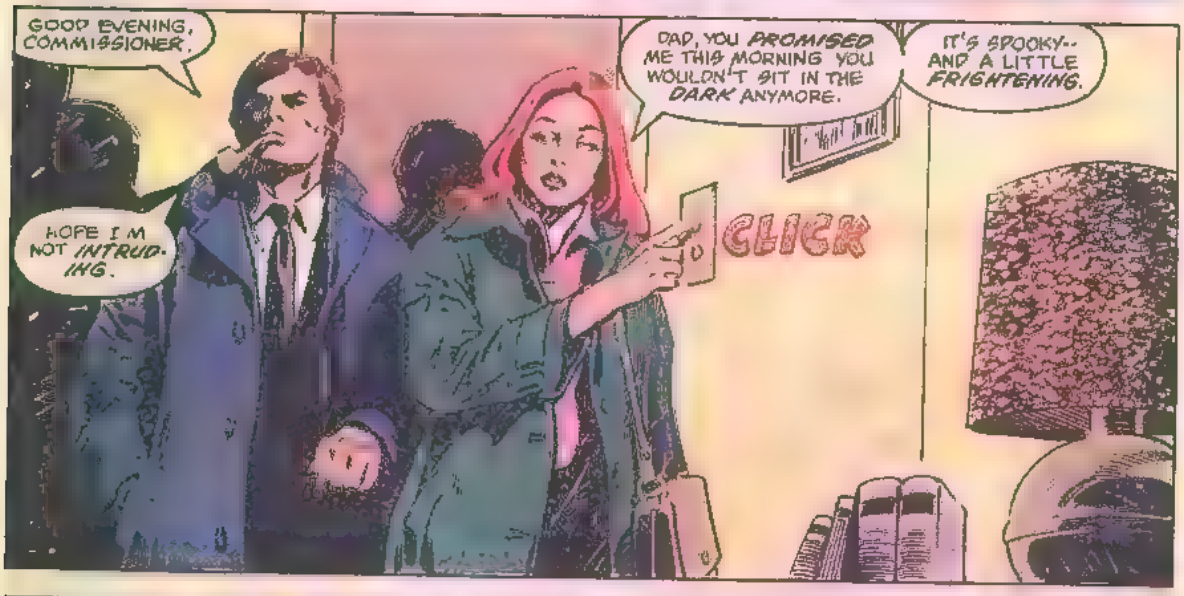
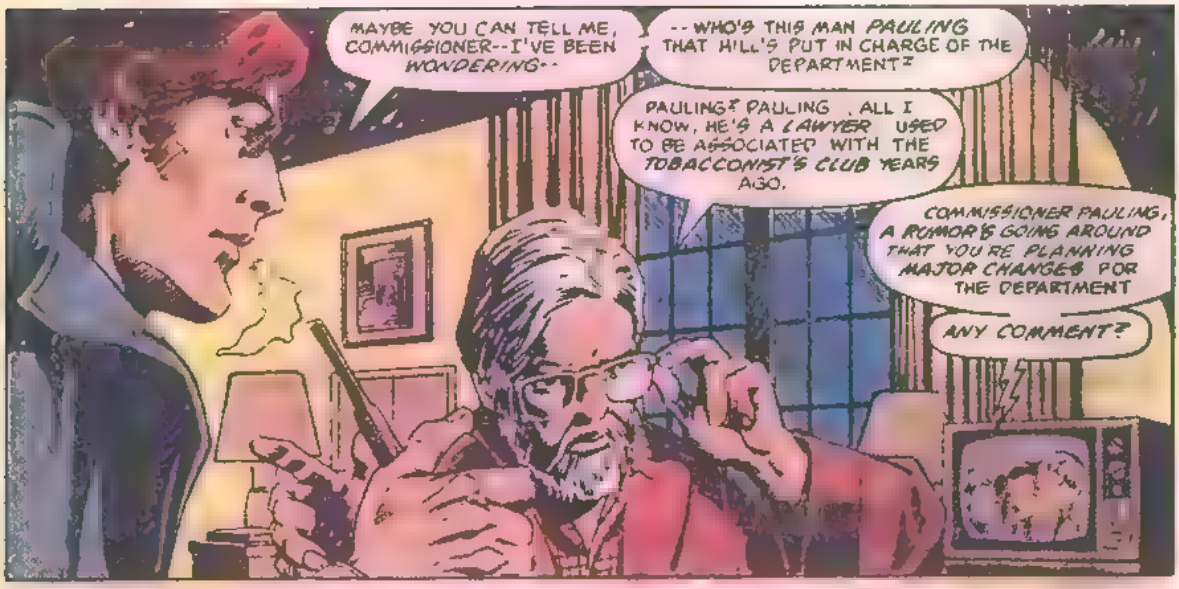
YOU SEE, JASON? IT'S AS BAD AS I TOLD YOU.
HE'S BEEN LIKE THIS EVER SINCE HE RESIGNED.

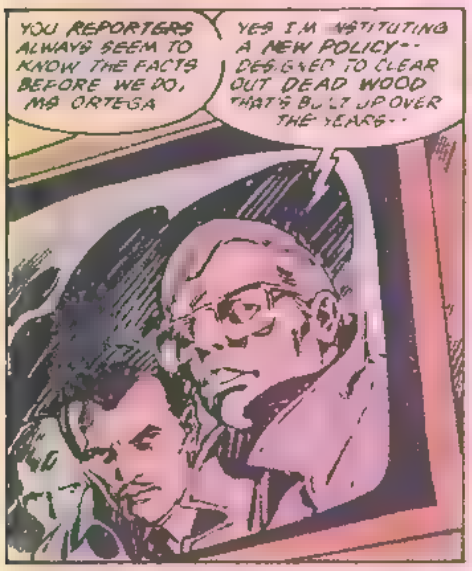

GOOD EVENING, COMMISSIONER.
HOPE I M NOT INTRUD-ING.
DAD, YOU PROMISED ME THIS MORNING YOU WOULDN'T SIT IN THE DARK ANYMORE.
IT'S SPOOKY-- AND A LITTLE FRIGHTENING.
CLICK

SORRY, BARBARA... I MUST HAVE LOST TRACK OF THE TIME.
I WAS JUST THINKING
DAD, YOU REMEMBER JASON BARD?
OF COURSE... AH...
...YOU RUN A DETECTIVE AGENCY, DON'T YOU?

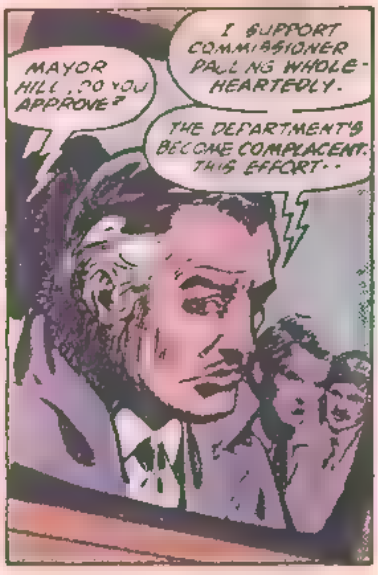
JASON WAS TELLING ME- HE'S TAKEN ON SO MUCH WORK LATELY HE'S LOOKING FOR A PARTNER
IT'S ALMOST ELEVEN O'CLOCK, DAD
THERE'S SOMETHING YOU SHOULD HEAR ON THE LOCAL NEWS.

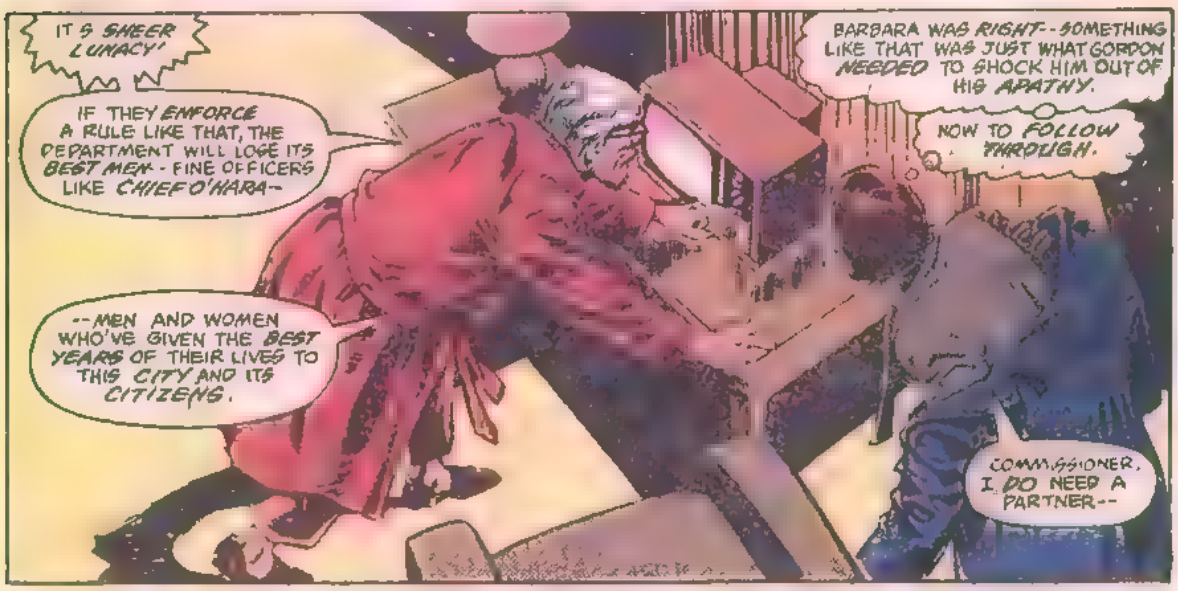
OLIVIA ORTEGA FOR SPOTLIGHT NEWS
THIS AFTERNOON AT AN IMPROMPTU PRESS CONFERENCE OUTSIDE CITY HALL, MAYOR HAMILTON HILL AND HIS NEW POLICE COMMISSIONER, PETER PAULING, ANNOUNCED CHANGES IN DEPARTMENT POLICY.


MAYBE YOU CAN TELL ME, COMMISSIONER--I'VE BEEN WONDERING--
--WHO'S THIS MAN PAULING THAT HILL'S PUT IN CHARGE OF THE DEPARTMENT?
PAULING? PAULING . ALL I KNOW, HE'S A LAWYER USED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE TOBACCONIST'S CLUB YEARS AGO.
COMMISSIONER PAULING, A RUMOR'S GOING AROUND THAT YOU'RE PLANNING MAJOR CHANGES FOR THE DEPARTMENT
ANY COMMENT?

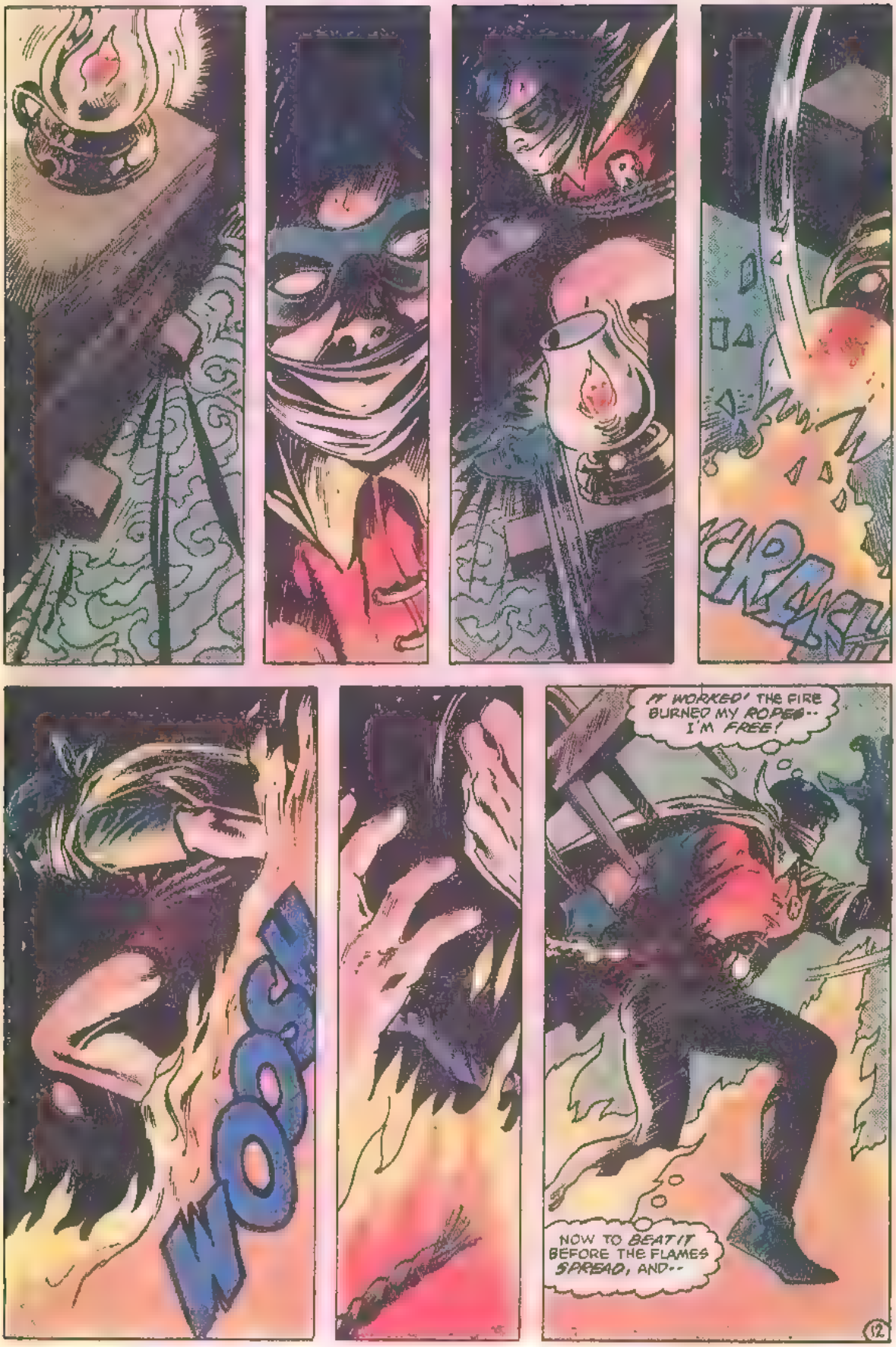

YOU REPORTERS ALWAYS SEEM TO KNOW THE FACTS BEFORE WE DO, MS ORTEGA
YES I'M INSTITUTING A NEW POLICY-- DESIGNED TO CLEAR OUT DEAD WOOD THAT'S BUILT UP OVER THE YEARS--

--MANDATORY RETIREMENT AFTER TWENTY YEARS' SERVICE.
WHAT?


MAYOR HILL, DO YOU APPROVE?
I SUPPORT COMMISSIONER PAULING WHOLE-HEARTEDLY.
THE DEPARTMENT'S BECOME COMPLACENT. THIS EFFORT--


IT'S SHEER LUNACY!
IF THEY ENFORCE A RULE LIKE THAT, THE DEPARTMENT WILL LOSE ITS BEST MEN - FINE OFFICERS LIKE CHIEF O'HARA--
--MEN AND WOMEN WHO'VE GIVEN THE BEST YEARS OF THEIR LIVES TO THIS CITY AND ITS CITIZENS.
BARBARA WAS RIGHT--SOMETHING LIKE THAT WAS JUST WHAT GORDON NEEDED TO SHOCK HIM OUT OF HIS APATHY.
NOW TO FOLLOW THROUGH.
COMMISSIONER, I DO NEED A PARTNER--

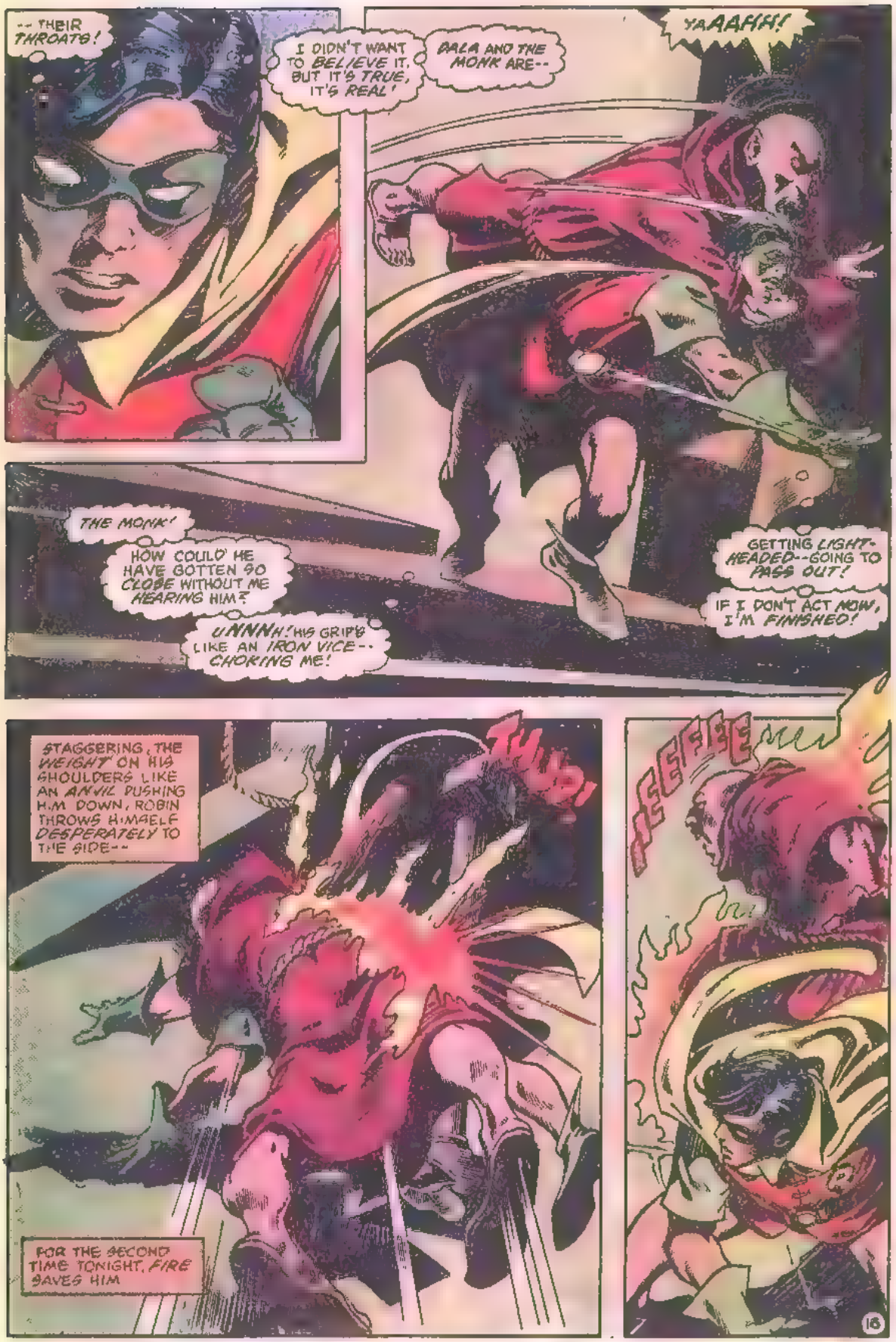
-- AND I CAN'T THINK OF ANYONE I'D RATHER WORK WITH THAN JAMES GORDON.
WE CAN START BY INVESTIGATING NOVEMBER'S ELECTION
BY HEAVENS, YES
JASON, YOU'VE GOT A DEAL.
HE CAN'T TAKE HIS EYES OFF THE LAMP
FOR THE PAST QUARTER-HOUR, AN IDEA HAS BEEN PUSHING ITS WAY UP FROM HIS SUBCONSCIOUS.
SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT OIL LAMP..
THE LAMP AND THE RUG BENEATH
THIS CARPET GOES RIGHT UNDER THE LAMP TABLE.
SHOULD I RISK IT?
YES!
11

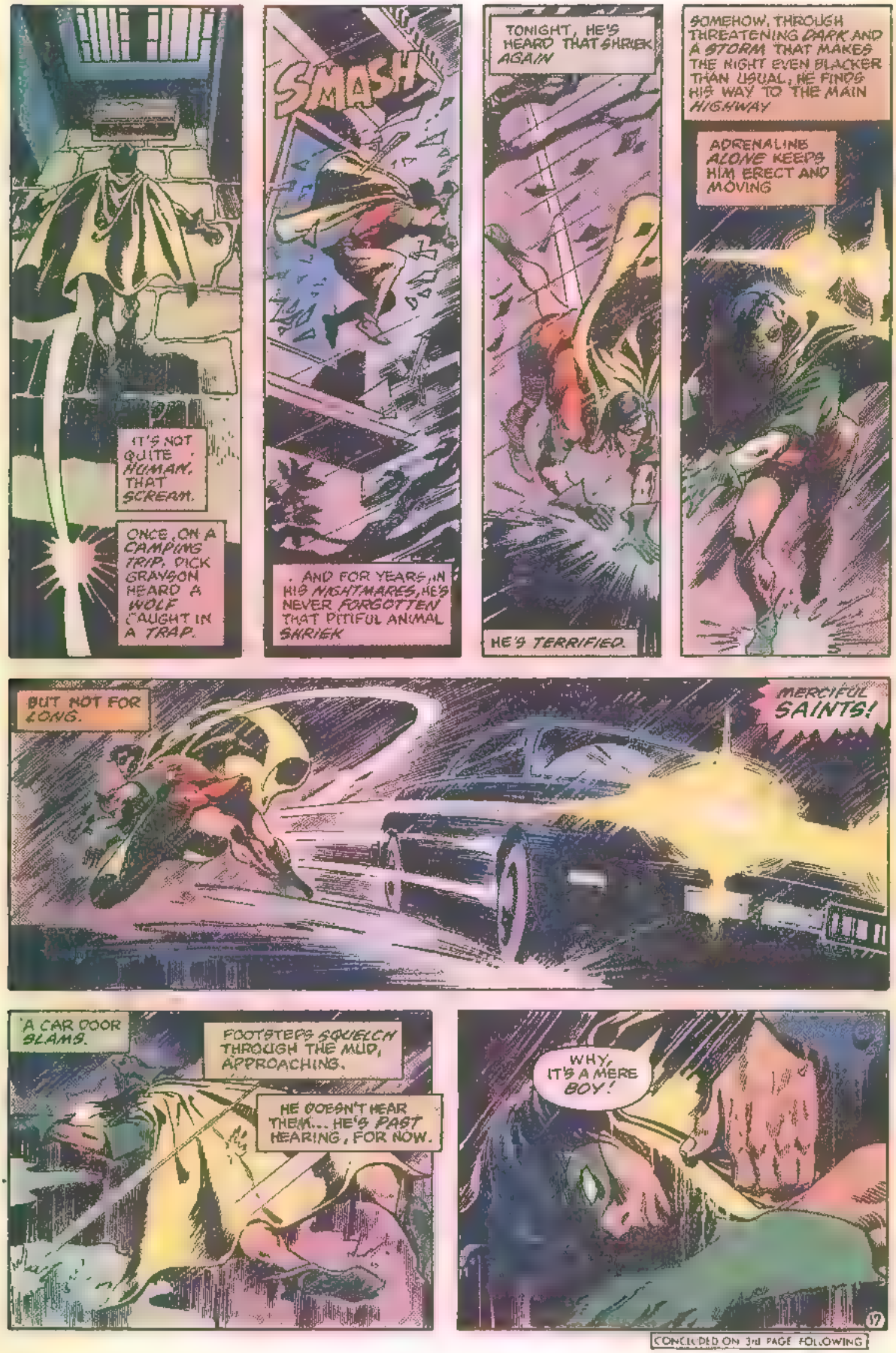

CRASH!!!
WOOSH
IT WORKED! THE FIRE BURNED MY ROPES-- I'M FREE!
NOW TO BEAT IT BEFORE THE FLAMES SPREAD, AND--
12

FOR A HEART-BEAT, HE HAS NO IDEA WHAT HAPPENED
BEHIND HIM, WOOD SPLINTERS AND A SUDDEN DRAFT SUCKS FLAMES TOWARD HIM
THEN, LIKE A RETURNING ECHO, HE HEARS THE SOUND OF A DOOR SMASHING INWARD--
CRAA
AAAA SHA
-- AND SPINS AROUND TO FACE INCARNATE HORROR:
DALA! MY GOD!
13

THAT GUY WITH HER IS LIKE SOMEONE OUT OF AN OLD HORROR MOVIE!
BUT THIS IS NO MOVIE-- HE'S REAL!
--AND WITH FIRE BEHIND ME, I'VE GOT NOWHERE TO RUN!
HE ALSO HAS NO MORE TIME TO THINK--
--AS A SNARLING THING SHAPED LIKE A MAN LANDS ON HIM WITH CLAWS SEEKING BLOOD AT HIS THROAT!
SAW HIM FALL THROUGH THAT WINDOW-- BUT I DIDN'T HEAR HIM HIT!
GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE!
THIS IS CRAZY..
--FLAT-OUT CRAZY!
OUT OF MY WAY, DALA!
NO! YOU SHALL NOT PASS!
GUESS AGAIN!
IT WAS NOT TO BE THIS WAY, RICHARD.
THE MONK PROMISED ME A CHANCE TO SEDUCE YOU.. BUT YOU HAVE STOLEN THAT CHANCE--
14

--AND MUST ACCEPT THE CONSEQUENCES'
AAAHH!
WHAM!
YOU'RE NUTS--
--AND I THOUGHT I LOVED YOU!
THIS DOOR ACROSS THE HALL--GOTTA BE THE WAY OUT--!
CRASH
--THE WAY OUT--
HIS PULSE IS HEAVY BEHIND HIS EYES.
HE FEELS AS IF REALITY WERE SLIPPING AWAY FROM HIM
HE CAN'T BE SEEING THIS
TWO HUMAN BEINGS-- TRUSSED LIKE SHEEP IN A SLAUGHTER HOUSE, AND THEIR THROATS--
15


-- THEIR THROATS!
I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT, BUT IT'S TRUE, IT'S REAL!
DALA AND THE MONK ARE--
YAAAHH!
THE MONK!
HOW COULD HE HAVE GOTTEN SO CLOSE WITHOUT ME HEARING HIM?
UNNNH! HIS GRIP'S LIKE AN IRON VICE-- CHOKING ME!
GETTING LIGHT-HEADED--GOING TO PASS OUT!
IF I DON'T ACT NOW, I'M FINISHED!
STAGGERING, THE WEIGHT ON HIS SHOULDERS LIKE AN ANVIL PUSHING HIM DOWN, ROBIN THROWS HIMSELF DESPERATELY TO THE SIDE--
THUD!
FOR THE SECOND TIME TONIGHT, FIRE SAVES HIM
FEEEEE
16


IT'S NOT QUITE HUMAN, THAT SCREAM.
ONCE, ON A CAMPING TRIP, DICK GRAYSON HEARD A WOLF CAUGHT IN A TRAP.
SMASH
. AND FOR YEARS, IN HIS NIGHTMARES, HE'S NEVER FORGOTTEN THAT PITIFUL ANIMAL SHRIEK
TONIGHT, HE'S HEARD THAT SHRIEK AGAIN
HE'S TERRIFIED.
SOMEHOW, THROUGH THREATENING DARK AND A STORM THAT MAKES THE NIGHT EVEN BLACKER THAN USUAL, HE FINDS HIS WAY TO THE MAIN HIGHWAY
ADRENALINE ALONE KEEPS HIM ERECT AND MOVING
BUT NOT FOR LONG.
MERCIFUL SAINTS!
A CAR DOOR SLAMS.
FOOTSTEPS SQUELCH THROUGH THE MUD, APPROACHING.
HE DOESN'T HEAR THEM... HE'S PAST HEARING, FOR NOW.
WHY, IT'S A MERE BOY!
17
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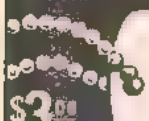

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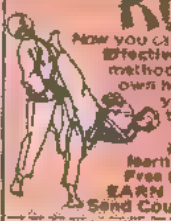

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AND EVEN A PRIEST WOULD KNOW THAT COSTUME
REST EASY, SON
YOU'RE IN SAFE HANDS, I PROMISE.
FROM A BROKEN WINDOW IN THE SHADOWED MANSION NOT FAR FROM THE HIGHWAY, TWO SILENT FIGURES WATCH AS ROBIN IS GINGERLY LIFTED INTO THE WAITING CAR...
.. AND ONE OF THE TWO GENTLY SMILES...
.. LICKING LIPS WET WITH BLOOD.
AND I'D APPRECIATE IT DAVE, IF THE POLICE WEREN'T NOTIFIED.
I HAVE MY REASONS
YOU'RE ONE OF THE DIRECTORS OF ST JUDE'S HOSPITAL, FATHER GREEN
WHAT YOU SAY GOES
WHAT ABOUT THOSE WOUNDS ON THE YOUNG MAN'S NECK?
THOSE WOUNDS? THEY'RE MY REASON FOR WANTING SILENCE, DOCTOR.
I'LL EXPLAIN LATER
BUT WOULD YOU BELIEVE ME IF I TOLD YOU THE TRUTH?
I DOUBT IT. YOU'RE A MAN OF SCIENCE.
AND WHAT MAN OF SCIENCE WOULD BELIEVE IN THE MARK OF THE VAMPIRI!
TO BE CONTINUED
NEXT: IN BATMAN #350.. SLAVE OF THE UNDEAD!
18

Dear Editor,

Given: BATMAN 344 by Conway, Colan and Janson. Conclusion. The eerie mood of Batman is back! Keep it up!

Robert Sasser, Age 15, 2221 Hemlock Way, Santa Ana, CA. 92704

We try, Robert. Matter of fact, we try harder. !

* * * * *

Dear Sir,

Just a note to let you know how much I enjoyed the wrap-up in BATMAN 344 and the new directions you are exploring.

I'm especially pleased by the changes in Dick Grayson. I like the idea of his returning to Gotham since I am very fond of Batman/Robin team-ups. I also like Dala and will be anxiously awaiting further developments in that relationship. It's about time Robin fell for a girl and this one looks special. And, it should be very interesting to see what happens when Bruce meets her.

As for Vicki.. maybe she'll grow on me.

Sincerely, Jeanne, 111 Heather Dr., Bristol, VA. 24201

Dala is special! You've already found out how 'special' if you've read this issue.

* * * * *

Gentlemen,

Why are Joe Kubert's covers so few and far between? The cover of "Monster My Sweet" is superb! I can't stop admiring it. (My wife thinks I'm ignoring her, but I can't help it. What a picture!)

Vicki Vale, eh? What can I say? (Except—God, do I feel old!) Hopefully, Gerry can inject a little more life into the red-tressed reporter. She used to be so very dull.

Peace, Dale Coe, 41, Whitecross Rd., Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 1LR, England.

* * * * *

We've had to fight tooth and nail for Kubert on this book, Dale. Fellow editors Berger, Boltinoff, Bridwell, Manak and Wein have been loathe to give him up...even for one issue!

If it's more Kubert you're screaming for, we direct your attention to SGT. ROCK, August, the 30th Anniversary issue. Page after page of beautiful artwork by the one-and-only Joe Kubert. "Thirty Years o' Dogtags" is a tale guaranteed to drill your heart. And while you're at it, you might wish to purchase a copy for your wife.

* * * * *

ASIDE TO THE GOOD GUYS. *Thanks for your Christmas cards. It is always nice to be remembered at this time of year and the volume of your cards was overwhelming. Especially lyrical in their wishes were CHUCK McKINNEY, Spearville, KS., SHEL GREENBY and MARCIA WILLIAMSON, Jersey City, NJ. Again, thank you: each and every one!*

* * * * *

Dear Dick,

Before I comment on "Monster, My Sweet," let me state that the continuity you have set up between this comic and DETECTIVE is simply incredible. Congratulations on meeting the task so successfully.

The November issue of BATMAN wrapped up a lot of subplots in an extremely satisfying way. I'm ashamed to admit it, but I thought you'd take the easy way out and kill Ivy, thus solving Bruce Wayne's problems. Instead you took the Batman's only gimmick, his ability to generate fear in that "superstitious, cowardly lot," to the point of utter madness. Gene Colan and Klaus Janson's depiction of the Dark Knight throughout the whole book was fantastic. They caught the sheer magnificence of the Batman totally. Indeed, the comic was immensely satisfiable.

As for Vicki Vale: she's married, right?

Stu Krull, 28 Kettle Creek Rd., Freehold, NJ. 07728

Right! (Or she was, anyway.) Keep reading... her true marital status will reveal itself in due time...or sooner!

* * * * *

Dear Dick,

I loved it! Page 5, panels 1 and 2. "Lucky for you my mother raised me to respect men!" Who would have guessed that Poison Ivy was such a wit?

Brandon Schneider, Blue Springs, MO

Not !

* * * * *

Dear Editor:

Lo! And behold! You, Dick, have brought him back to the surface. The lurking in the shadows, the surprise, the mystery, the art, the story telling. The Batman! I doff my hat to you.

Yours truly, Kevin Kris, 44 Jacwin, Pickering, Ont., L1V 2N2

I didn't think anyone wore hats any more. I don't. And if I did, I don't know if I'd doff it (whatever that is).

Seriously, thank you much. Kind words are a soothing balm.

* * * * *

Dear Editor,

It was the best! I really enjoyed BATMAN #344. I am finally glad that Batman, as well as Robin, is getting his act together. Gerry Conway is the best writer for Batman, he brings out something in Batman that makes him seem like a real person. Everything about the story was perfect.

The ending for Poison Ivy's appearance was well done. I sometimes wonder if she is insane. Please bring her back again?

The sudden appearance of Vicki Vale was quite a surprise! I am dying to find out what she is up to. I am sure we will find out soon?

Having Robin back is good, I hope. I did not like all the bitterness between him and the Batman. Maybe it is time for Robin to get a new costume?

One thing I am disappointed in is the ending of Selina Kyle's stay in Batman. I really liked her, and even if she thought she and Bruce could not make it together, she could have fought crime alongside of Batman. Will we see her again? I was hoping that we would see her meet up with The Huntress. Maybe in another comic, like Wonder Woman, or the Justice League?

Also I think that Batman could use a few guest stars every now and then. Maybe some of the Teen Titans, or the Black Orchid, or even The Bat Squad?

I have just one final thing that I would like to say. It is about the art work. It was beautiful, perfect, wonderful, and it is Batman at his best! Gene Colan and Klaus Janson did a great job! Keep them forever!

What more can I say?

Yours truly, Robert Urquhart, Naval Hospital, Box 12, Patuxent River, MD

1—Batman is a real person.

2—You'll see Catwoman/Selina Kyle again. Regularly. Here in the pages of **BATMAN**.

3 -Batman has a guest star every month! In **THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD**

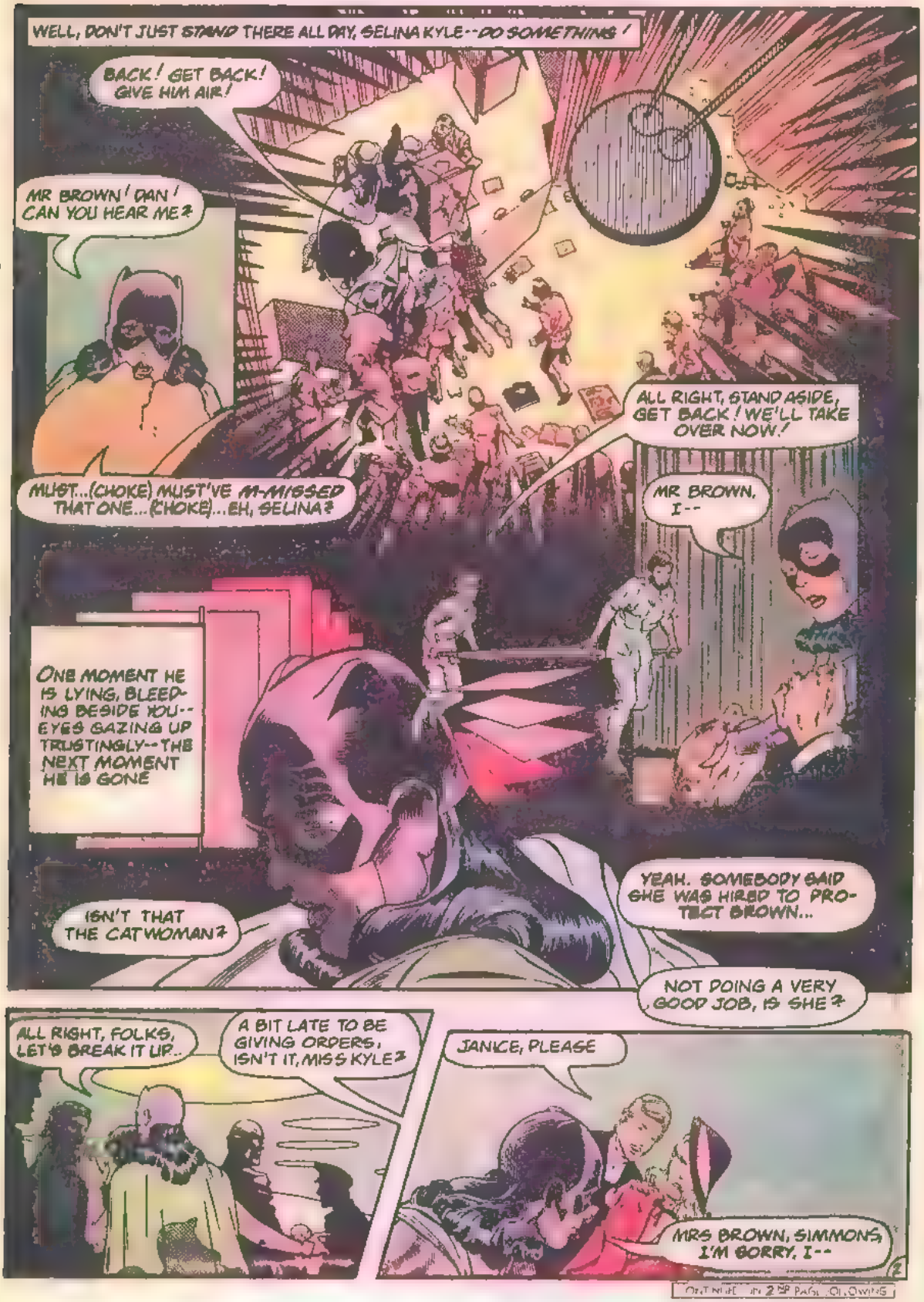
* * * * *

THE CONTINUING ADVENTURES OF BATMAN. Next week, in the pages of THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD, Batman stars in "A Grave as Wide as the World" by Kanigher and Aparo. If that episode fails to sate your appetite for Darknight Detective action, latch onto the July issue of WORLD'S FINEST COMICS. Your two favorite heroes, Batman and Superman, star in the lead tale of that issue in a tale entitled "War In The Streets" by Burkett and Novick, for all of you readers who clamor for another Novick-Batman!

Thank you and Good Afternoon!

THE MAN
THE BULLET
THE CAT
PART TWO
HE'S BEEN SHOT! CANDIDATE BROWN'S BEEN SHOT!
STAND BACK!
OH MY GOD!
SOMEBODY GET A DOCTOR!
IS HE DEAD?
YOU STAND THERE, SELINA KYLE, AMID THE SCREAMING THRONG OF PANICKED UNION MEMBERS. . DUMBFOUNDED, UNABLE, FOR THE MOMENT, TO MOVE..
. YOU STAND THERE AND YOU GAPE, OPEN-MOUTHED, AT THE BURLY FORM SLOPED UNCEREMONIOUSLY OVER THE WOODEN PODIUM, THE THIN THREAD OF SMOKE STILL WAFTING FROM THE HOLE IN HIS COAT.
A MOMENT AGO, HE WAS C.L.A. UNION PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE DANIEL BROWN OF CHICAGO; VIBRANT, AUTHORITATIVE--MOVING! NOW, THANKS TO YOU, SELINA KYLE, HE MOVES NO MORE

BRUCE JONES ☆ WRITER | TREVOR VON EEDEN & LARRY MAHLSTEDT ARTISTS | ☆ A KUBERT ☆ LETTERER | TOM ZIUKO COLORIST | ☆ D. GIORDANO EDITOR


WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE ALL DAY, SELINA KYLE--DO SOMETHING!
BACK! GET BACK! GIVE HIM AIR!
MR BROWN! DAN! CAN YOU HEAR ME?
ALL RIGHT, STAND ASIDE, GET BACK! WE'LL TAKE OVER NOW!
MUST...(CHOKE) MUST'VE M-MISSED THAT ONE...(CHOKE)...EH, SELINA?
MR. BROWN, I--
ONE MOMENT HE IS LYING, BLEEDING BESIDE YOU--EYES GAZING UP TRUSTINGLY--THE NEXT MOMENT HE IS GONE
YEAH. SOMEBODY SAID SHE WAS HIRED TO PROTECT BROWN...
ISN'T THAT THE CATWOMAN?
NOT DOING A VERY GOOD JOB, IS SHE?
ALL RIGHT, FOLKS, LET'S BREAK IT UP..
A BIT LATE TO BE GIVING ORDERS, ISN'T IT, MISS KYLE?
JANICE, PLEASE
MRS BROWN, SIMMONS, I'M SORRY, I--

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

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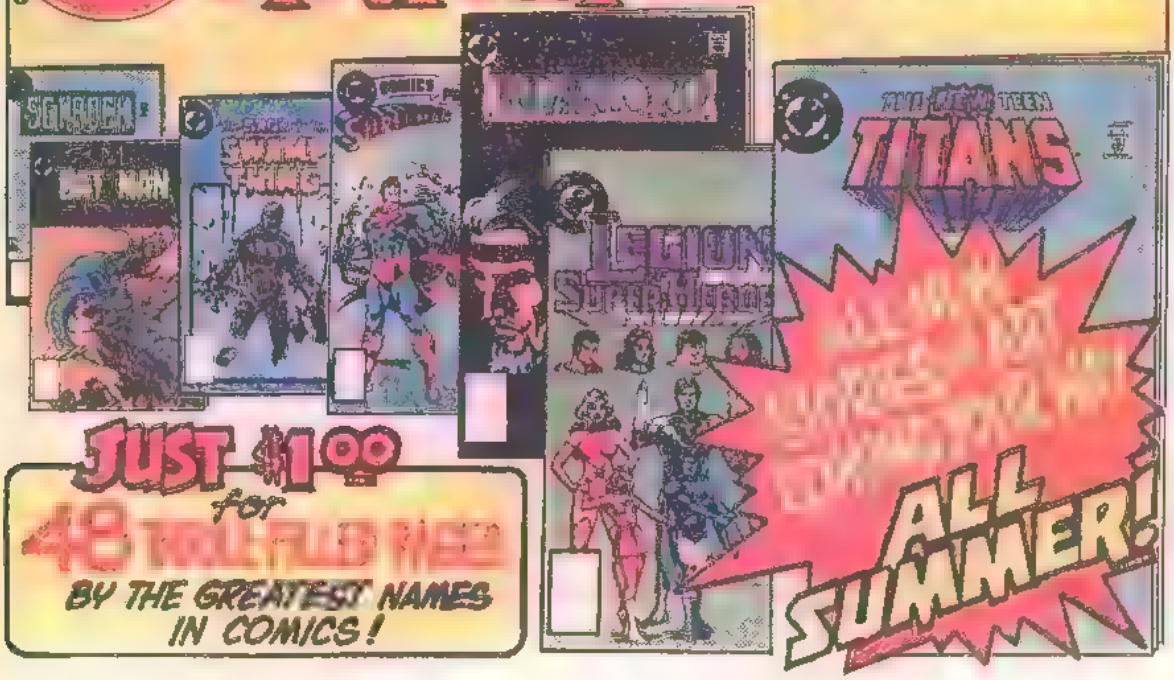

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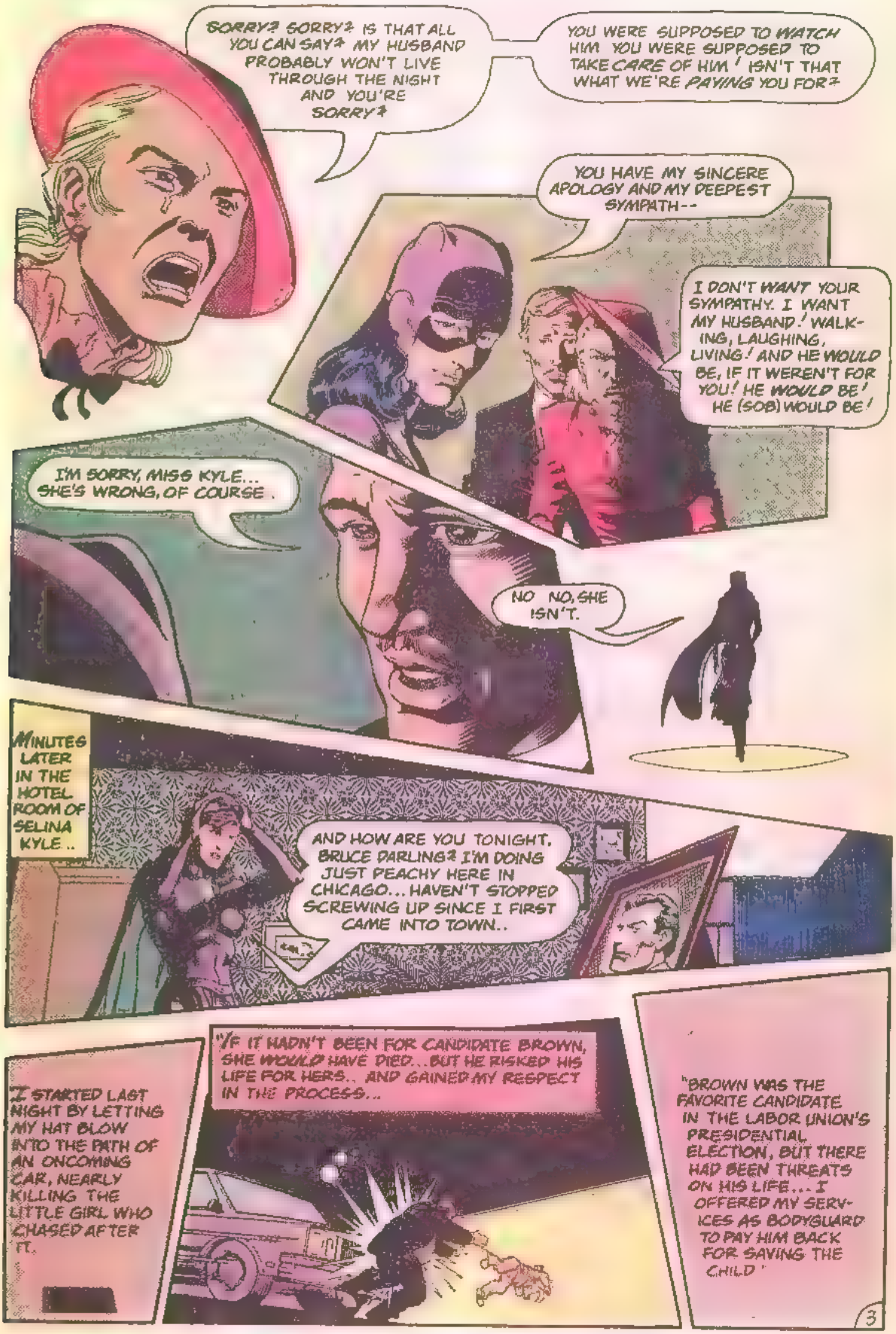
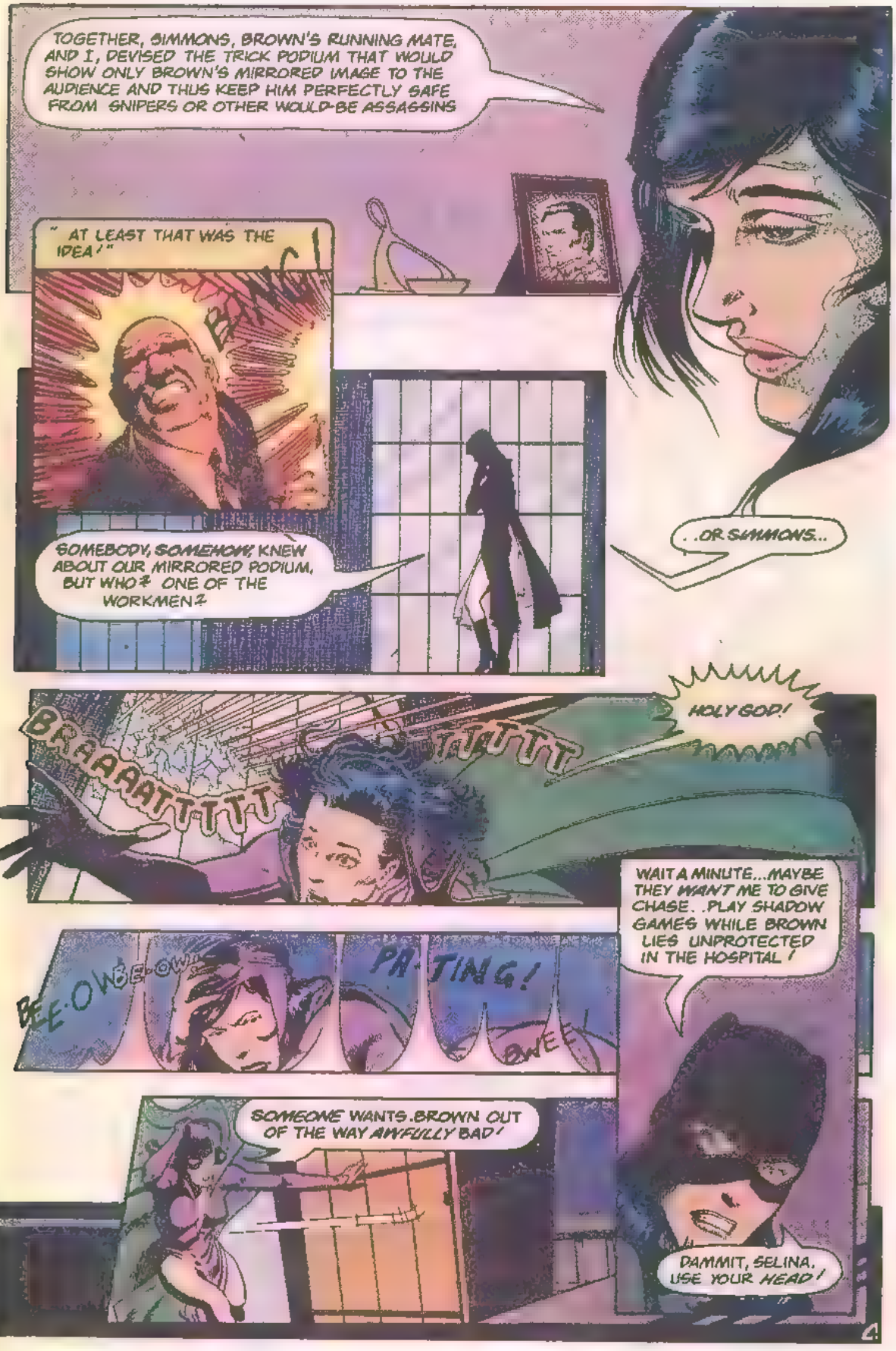
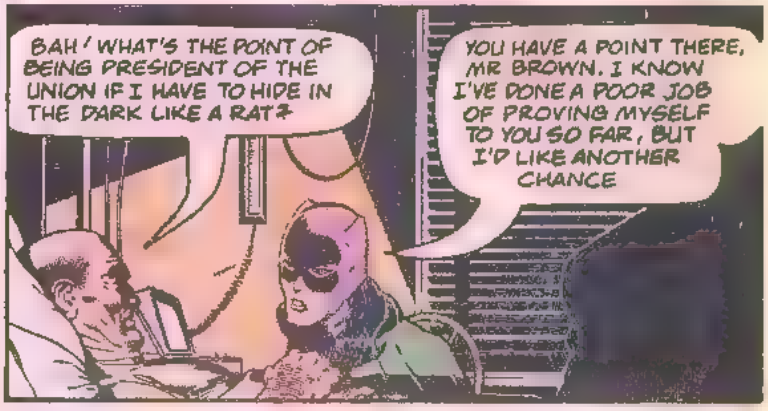

SORRY? SORRY? IS THAT ALL YOU CAN SAY? MY HUSBAND PROBABLY WON'T LIVE THROUGH THE NIGHT AND YOU'RE SORRY?
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO WATCH HIM YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO TAKE CARE OF HIM! ISN'T THAT WHAT WE'RE PAYING YOU FOR?
YOU HAVE MY SINCERE APOLOGY AND MY DEEPEST SYMPATH--
I DON'T WANT YOUR SYMPATHY. I WANT MY HUSBAND! WALKING, LAUGHING, LIVING! AND HE WOULD BE, IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU! HE WOULD BE! HE (SOB) WOULD BE!
I'M SORRY, MISS KYLE... SHE'S WRONG, OF COURSE.
NO NO, SHE ISN'T.
MINUTES LATER IN THE HOTEL ROOM OF SELINA KYLE..
AND HOW ARE YOU TONIGHT, BRUCE DARLING? I'M DOING JUST PEACHY HERE IN CHICAGO... HAVEN'T STOPPED SCREWING UP SINCE I FIRST CAME INTO TOWN..
"IT STARTED LAST NIGHT BY LETTING MY HAT BLOW INTO THE PATH OF AN ONCOMING CAR, NEARLY KILLING THE LITTLE GIRL WHO CHASED AFTER IT.
"IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR CANDIDATE BROWN, SHE WOULD HAVE DIED... BUT HE RISKED HIS LIFE FOR HERS.. AND GAINED MY RESPECT IN THE PROCESS...
"BROWN WAS THE FAVORITE CANDIDATE IN THE LABOR UNION'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, BUT THERE HAD BEEN THREATS ON HIS LIFE... I OFFERED MY SERVICES AS BODYGUARD TO PAY HIM BACK FOR SAVING THE CHILD.

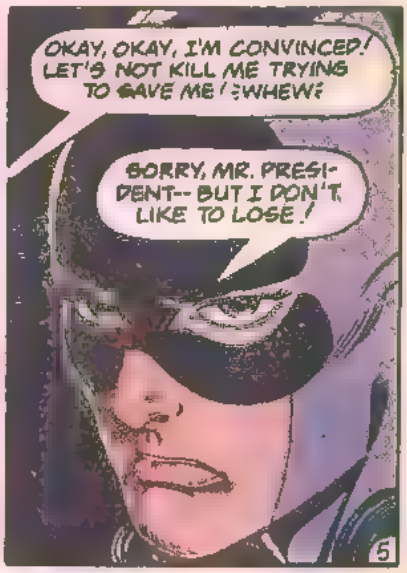

TOGETHER, SIMMONS, BROWN'S RUNNING MATE, AND I, DEVISED THE TRICK PODIUM THAT WOULD SHOW ONLY BROWN'S MIRRORED IMAGE TO THE AUDIENCE AND THUS KEEP HIM PERFECTLY SAFE FROM SNIPERS OR OTHER WOULD-BE ASSASSINS
" AT LEAST THAT WAS THE IDEA!"
BANG!
SOMEBODY, SOMEHOW, KNEW ABOUT OUR MIRRORED PODIUM, BUT WHO? ONE OF THE WORKMEN?
. .OR SIMMONS...
BRAAAATTTTTT
TTTTTT
HOLY GOD!
BEE-OWEE-OWEE
PA-TING!
BWEE!
WAIT A MINUTE...MAYBE THEY WANT ME TO GIVE CHASE. .PLAY SHADOW GAMES WHILE BROWN LIES UNPROTECTED IN THE HOSPITAL!
SOMEONE WANTS BROWN OUT OF THE WAY AWFULLY BAD!
DAMMIT, SELINA, USE YOUR HEAD!

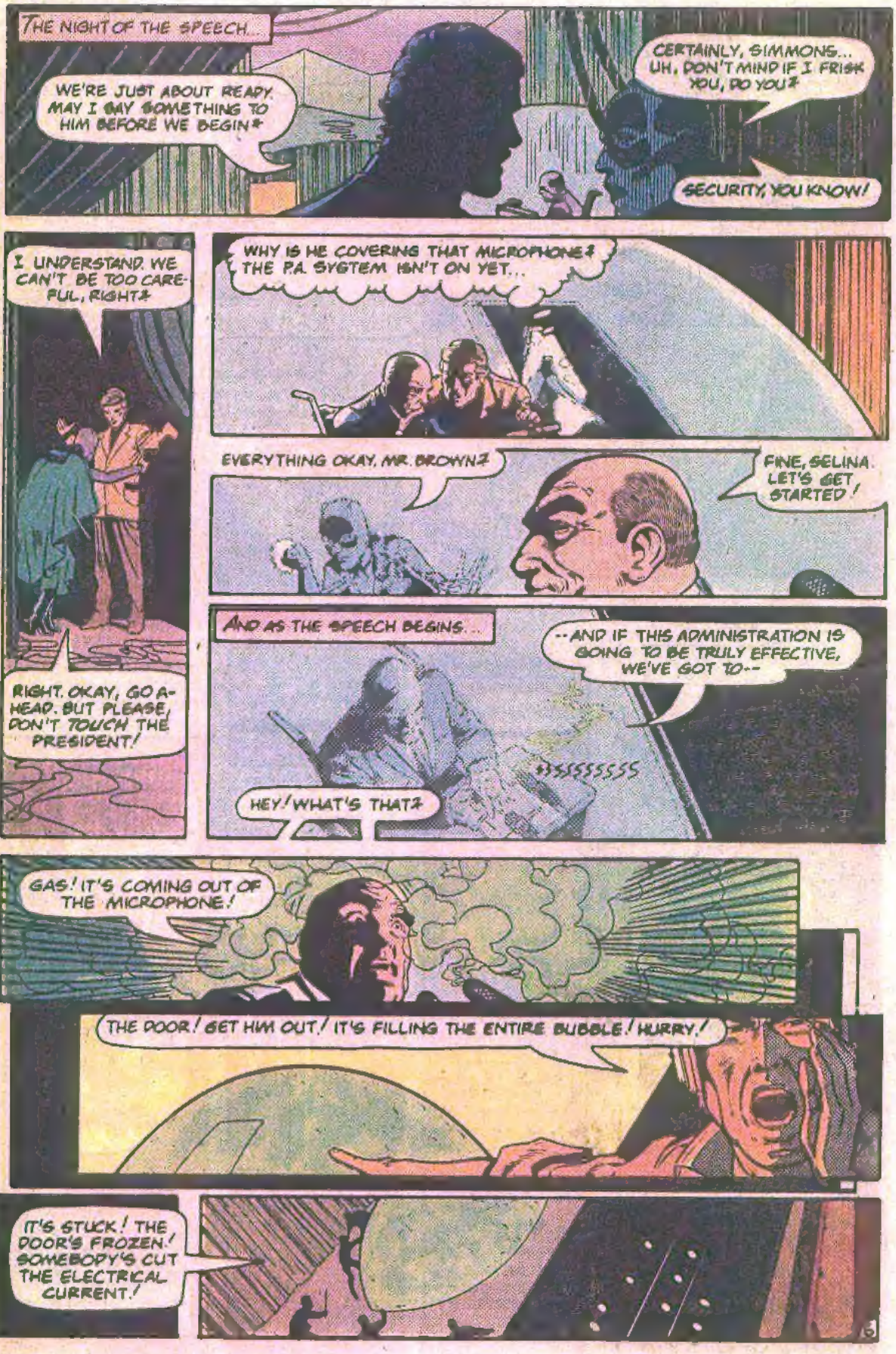
COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL
HE WON'T WALK AGAIN, BUT IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE ... ONE MORE INCH IN THE WRONG DIRECTION AND HE'D BE A DEAD MAN. ALMOST AS IF IT WERE PLANNED THAT WAY...
CAN I SEE HIM NOW?

--DON'T WORRY, MISS KYLE YOU DID YOUR BEST, AND I DID WIN THE ELECTION! SYMPATHY VOTE, YOU KNOW!
HE WANTS TO MAKE AN ACCEPTANCE SPEECH. I'VE TOLD HIM HE'S MAD..


BAH! WHAT'S THE POINT OF BEING PRESIDENT OF THE UNION IF I HAVE TO HIDE IN THE DARK LIKE A RAT?
YOU HAVE A POINT THERE, MR BROWN. I KNOW I'VE DONE A POOR JOB OF PROVING MYSELF TO YOU SO FAR, BUT I'D LIKE ANOTHER CHANCE

NO ILLUSIONS THIS TIME. THEY CAN THROW FIRE AT YOU WITH AN 80 MM HOWITZER AND NOT GET THROUGH *THAT* MATERIAL!




THE NIGHT OF THE SPEECH...
WE'RE JUST ABOUT READY. MAY I SAY SOMETHING TO HIM BEFORE WE BEGIN?
CERTAINLY, SIMMONS... UH, DON'T MIND IF I FRISK YOU, DO YOU?
SECURITY, YOU KNOW!
I UNDERSTAND. WE CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL, RIGHT?
RIGHT. OKAY, GO AHEAD. BUT PLEASE, DON'T TOUCH THE PRESIDENT!
WHY IS HE COVERING THAT MICROPHONE? THE P.A. SYSTEM ISN'T ON YET...
EVERYTHING OKAY, MR. BROWN?
FINE, SELINA. LET'S GET STARTED!
AND AS THE SPEECH BEGINS...
--AND IF THIS ADMINISTRATION IS GOING TO BE TRULY EFFECTIVE, WE'VE GOT TO--
HEY! WHAT'S THAT?
GAS! IT'S COMING OUT OF THE MICROPHONE!
THE DOOR! GET HIM OUT! IT'S FILLING THE ENTIRE BUBBLE! HURRY!
IT'S STUCK! THE DOOR'S FROZEN! SOMEBODY'S CUT THE ELECTRICAL CURRENT!

GET BACK!
IT'S TOO LATE BY NOW!
BUT AFTER THE DOOR IS PRIED OPEN...
WHAT THE--
H-HE'S GONE!
YOU CAN CUT THE ACT NOW, SIMMONS!
I'M ALIVE AND WELL, THANK YOU--OR SHOULD I SAY THANKS TO CATWOMAN?
I'LL TAKE THE CYANIDE CAPSULES YOU PLANTED IN THAT MICROPHONE, SIMMONS!
SHE MADE ME DO IT! HIS WIFE! JANICE SAID HE'D NEVER WIN THE ELECTION IF THINGS KEPT GOING THE WAY THEY WERE--WE HIRED A SHARP-SHOOTER TO WOUND HIM, KNOWING HE'D WIN ON A SYMPATHY VOTE!
THEN WE'D KILL HIM AND I WOULD INHERIT HIS POST, GAINING CONTROL OF THE UNION!
STOP HER!
STOP HER!
RELAX, MR. PRESIDENT--SHE WON'T GET FAR!
THE FLOOR OPENS BENEATH THE FLEEING WOMAN...
...AND THE PRESIDENT'S WIFE PLUNGES INTO THE TUNNEL CATWOMAN PREPARED FOR BROWN'S EMERGENCY EXIT FROM THE BUBBLE...
SECONDS LATER, AS THE HOUSE MEDIC ARRIVES...
SHE'S ALIVE, BUT HER SPINE'S BROKEN...
"SHE'LL NEVER WALK AGAIN!"

Dominate Others With Fantastic Brute Strength!

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by Joe Nazario, Mr. U.S.A. Physique Champion, 1977, Mr. International, 1978

Regardless of your age, weight & height, if you can spare 90 seconds a day, you CAN get back into shape!

Achieve these five muscle improvements within one month, or you pay nothing!

- ☐ See your abdomen become a taut wall of muscle!
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- ☐ Develop a deep and powerful chest!
- ☐ Strengthen your back, thighs and calves!

I'm a professional body builder. I won the Mr. U.S.A. competition in 1977, and the Mr. International contest in 1978. I'll probably win Mr. Universe this year. I'm also in the exercise and health consulting business in New York City.

So I'm familiar with exercise and body building programs. I've probably tried every single one of them. And do you know something? Not one of them is worth the money you have to pay!

The reason is simple. Every so-called exercise machine, every weight-lifting set ever made works on one of two principles: isometric (putting stress on muscles that do not move) or isotonic (moving muscles under stress).

So, when you pay good money for a machine or a set of fancy equipment, you're buying a gimmick. You can accomplish *exactly the same exercise value*, get exactly the same results, without the machine—IF YOU KNOW HOW! What's more, since machines and weights put a tremendous amount of stress on weak, underdeveloped muscles, they can *actually cause more harm than good.*

THE SIMPLE LOCKER ROOM SECRET THAT REALLY WORKS, IN JUST 90 SECONDS

In my years as an athlete and as an "iron pumper," I've seen hundreds of men get ready for strenuous competition. Each had his own personal mannerisms. Each had favorite warm-up exercises. But over the years, I noticed a simple, common thread that was common to all.

I actually discovered the simple locker room secret that the pros use to build up their bodies in just 90 seconds!

That's right, using my secret, you can exercise *all 18 muscle groups* in your body in just 90 seconds. Eighteen simple exercises, every day, just five seconds on each. And within two weeks or less, you'll begin to notice the difference.

You'll FEEL stronger! You'll LOOK healthier, your body will be FAR MORE ATTRACTIVE! I'm not talking about tiny differences you can measure with a tape—I'm talking about *great changes* you'll begin to feel yourself, you'll notice in the mirror, your friends will notice on the beach!

WHAT IS MY AMAZING SECRET?

Frankly, it'll cost you $5.00 to find out. After all, a secret as good as this one, a secret that will make your body stronger, healthier, better looking is *worth* $5.00! But I'll give you a hint. It's a combination of the priacples of *both* isometrics and isotonics. I call it "Tonometrics". And it requires no special equipment, no fancy gym. You can use my "tonometric" techniques and special "tonometric" exercises in your bedroom, bathroom, even in your office during your coffee break!

There are 18 special exercises in all, one for each of the 18 major muscle groups in your body. And each exercise takes just 5 seconds to do.

SEE THE RESULTS YOU CAN EXPECT FROM MY SECRET "TONOMETRIC" EXERCISE PROGRAM—DEPENDING UPON YOUR AGE:

If you are basically healthy and eat a balanced diet, the percentage of total performance can improve as follows using the "tonometric" program:

Age	Amount of Improvement	Age	Amount of Improvement
15	up to 100%	35	up to 180%
18	up to 130%	40	up to 150%
21	up to 150%	50	up to 100%
25	up to 200%	60	up to 70%
30	up to 200%	70	up to 50%

Of course, if you have a weak heart, or any physical disability, you should consult with your physician before beginning this or any other exercise program.

ABSOLUTELY NO RISK TO YOU!

When you send me your $5.00, I'll send you a booklet explaining the "tonometric" concept, and outlining an exercise program using my 18 basic exercises designed to *trim down fat and flab...and build up weak, underdeveloped muscles.* BUT I WON'T CASH YOUR CHECK FOR 30 DAYS!

That way, you'll have plenty of time to try my amazing "tonometric" program, and decide for yourself *if* it's everything I say or not. IF YOU'RE NOT ABSOLUTELY THRILLED, SIMPLY RETURN THE MATERIAL AND I'LL SEND BACK YOUR CHECK!

What could be fairer than that? Since you've got nothing to lose, and only a beautiful, strong, firm body to gain, why not send me the coupon, and the check for $5.00, today?

MEET JOE NAZARIO, CREATOR OF THE "TONOMETRIC" SYSTEM

Joe is 29 years old. He presently is in the health food business, and conducts seminars on health, nutrition, and exercise.

Joe has served as a consultant to industry, and gives private body building instruction. In 1977, Joe won the Mr. U.S.A. Physique Championship, and in 1978 he was named Mr. International.

Height: 5'10½"
Chest: 52"
Arms: 19"
Calves: 17"
Weight: 215
Waist: 34"
Thighs: 28"
Neck: 18"

Joe Nazario, Dept. DC-782 #18443
404 Park Ave. South
New York, N.Y. 10016

Dear Joe:
I want to learn the secret professional musclemen use to build up their bodies in just 90 seconds a day. Please rush me your complete program of 18 exercises. I am enclosing my check or money-order for $5.00—which I understand you'll return to me uncashed in 30 days if I am dissatisfied in any way. (New York residents please add sales tax.)

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Address _____

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Put on magic shows.

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Send today and get double discs!

If you hurry, Willy Wonka will send you TWO Magic Discs... one red...one blue... here's all you have to do!

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(Please print)

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